Reds on Instagram | Managers at Melwood | Inside the new dressing-room | The month ahead

LIVERPOOL FC

Official Liverpool FC Monthly Magazine

liverpoolfc.com

ISSUE 058

LFC Mag Jun 2017 £4.25

06

9 771478 304150

RAGNAR KLAVAN
On the movie of his life!

ROME 1977
The 40th anniversary

HARRY WILSON
LFC's young Welsh wizard

BRAZILIANT

HOW PHIL AND BOBBY TOOK THE PREMIER LEAGUE BY STORM





BETVICTOR

WIN THE NEW HOME SHIRT!
Awesome competition inside



My thank you to the fans
SADIO MANE

Contents

Issue 58 June 2017

We celebrate LFC's illustrious past, full-throttle present and exciting future in June's action-packed issue…

LIVERPOOL

A lively front section exploring the wider LFC world and keeping fans up-to-date with what's happening and what's about to.

FOOTBALL

The stuff that happens on the pitch: exclusive interviews with current Reds stars, the stats that matter plus a few blasts from the past.

CLUB

How the club reaches out to communities at home and abroad, plus stadium news, fab official merchandise, and fan representatives.

Trinity Mirror Sport Media
Editor David Cottrell **Assistant Editor** William Hughes **Art Editor** Neil Haines **Designer** Lisa-Marie Critchley **Writer** Chris McLoughlin **Production Editor** Michael McGuinness
Contributors Dave Ball, Ged Rea **Photography** Press Association, Getty Images, Mirrorpix, Liverpool Echo, John Powell, Andrew Powell, Nicholas Taylor
© Liverpool Football Club & Athletic Grounds Ltd. Published by Sport Media **Managing Director** Steve Hanrahan **Commercial Director** Will Beedles
Senior Executive Art Editor Rick Cooke **Executive Editor** Paul Dove **Marketing & Communications Manager** Claire Brown **Printed by** William Gibbons
Email liverpoolfcmag@trinitymirror.com. To subscribe call **0845 143 0001** or visit **www.sportmediashop.com**

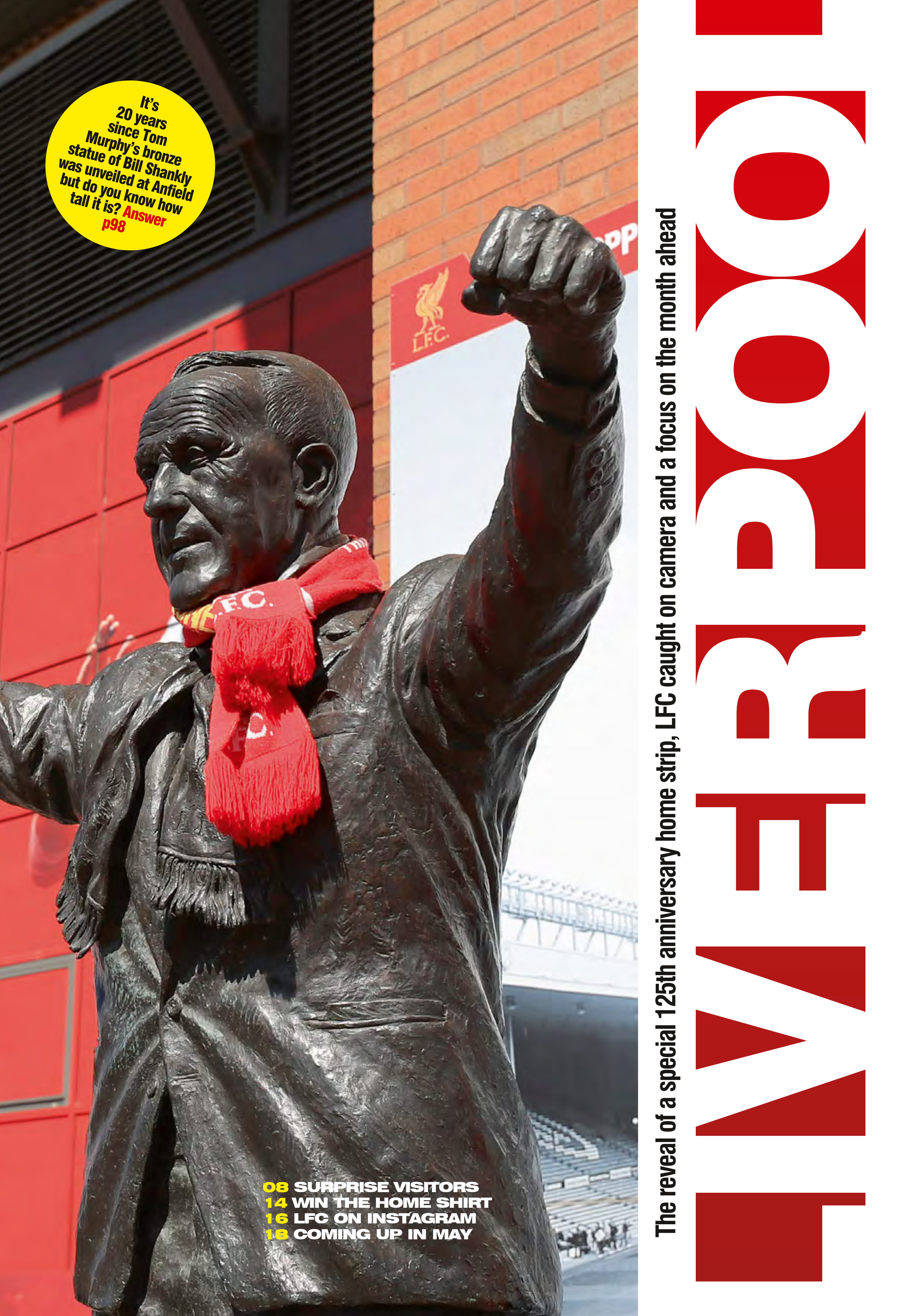



AMRABAT
7
FIRMINO
11



Can-tastic day

Emre Can produced one of the goals of the season to keep the Reds' bid for Champions League qualification on track at Watford. The German's breathtaking scissors kick combined athleticism, timing and accuracy - a strike worthy to win any game.



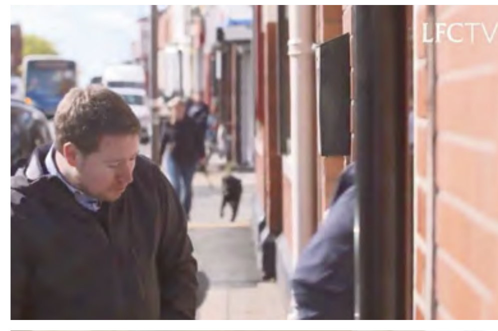
INTRO

The reveal of a special 125th anniversary home strip, LFC caught on camera and a focus on the month ahead

It's 20 years since Tom Murphy's bronze statue of Bill Shankly was unveiled at Anfield but do you know how tall it is? Answer p98

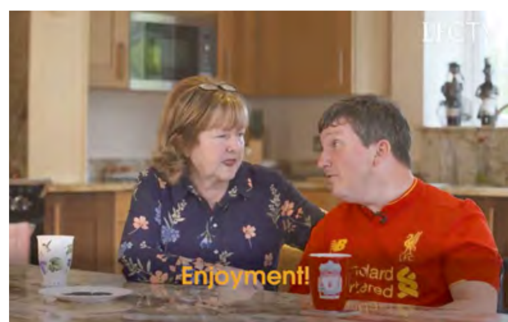




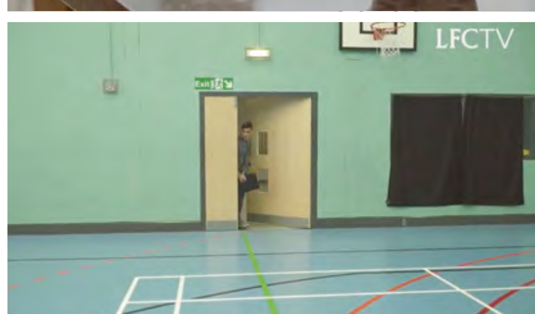


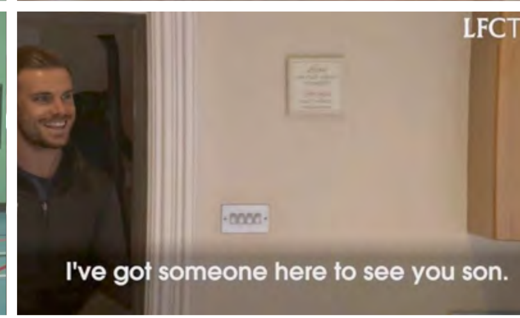












PURE LIVERPOOL FC

A brilliant new video shows four loyal fans get a special first look at the 125th anniversary home kit for next season, through an unexpected visit from some famous LFC faces…








LFCTV
I was born on 20th May 1922.
And LFC is his life.
've been going the match about 13 years.
The people I've met from going the game
I like it when my Dad takes me to the match
Charlie!
St John! How are you?
Robbie?
FOR THE 96
Hi, nice to meet you.
It's boss!
Here it is sir. That is yours.
Standard Chartered
FOUR SUPPORTERS
FOUR STORIES
PURE LIVERPOOL FC



That was the video, so here's our new 125th anniversary home shirt in close-up detail

A Liverbird upon our chest, 125 years on

Authentic New Balance gear

Rich, darker red. Pinstripes. White-tipped V-neck collar. LFC's future inspired by our glorious 125-year past



Learn To Play The Liverpool Way Around The World

The LFC International Academy offers young aspiring players all over the world an opportunity to learn to play The Liverpool Way in their own local area by delivering an extensive range of programmes across a number of global locations.

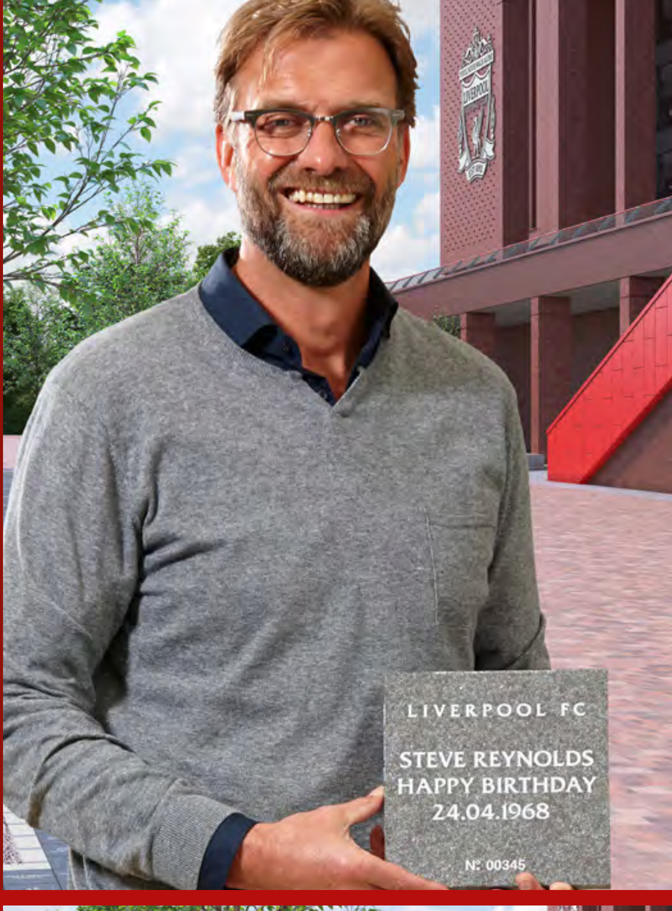
It brings the technical expertise of the Club's very own Academy to boys and girls around the world, helping to develop the player both on and off the pitch. A variety of different courses are available, from soccer schools to longer term player development programmes.

All activities are led by LFC appointed coaches, providing young fans around the world an opportunity to be part of the world's greatest football family. Now you can be part of it too!

Find out more www.lfcinternationalacademy.com



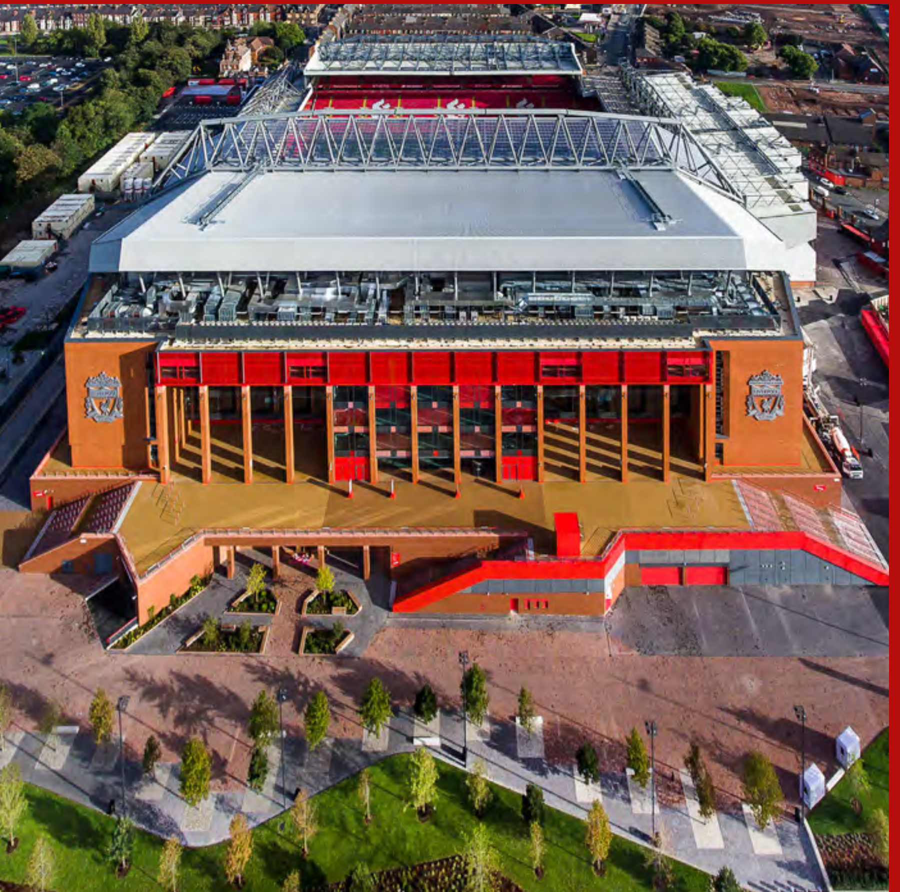




Take your place in

Anfield Forever





Don't miss your chance to join our exciting new LFC landmark at Anfield Stadium.

Anfield Forever is a landscaped area that will form the walkway alongside the Main Stand - and you can buy your very own personalised engraved granite stone.

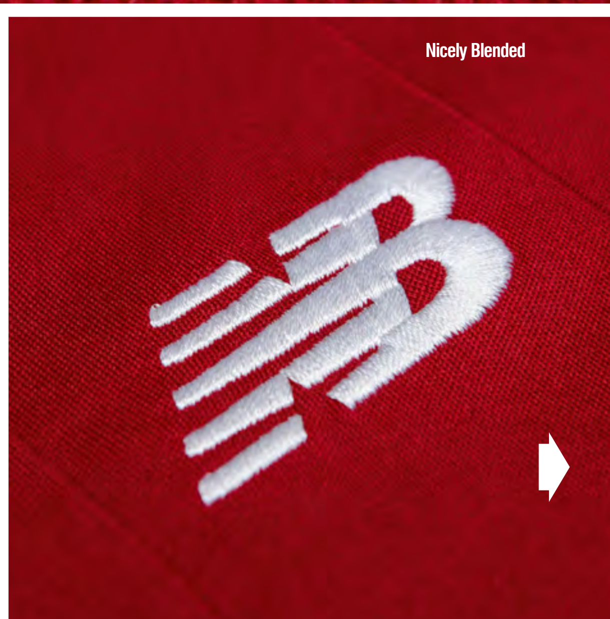
Find out more

liverpoolfc.com/ anfieldforever

125 years of Liverpool FC.
Thank you John Houlding!



Anyone else thinking of
Rome '84 like we are?



Nicely Blended



Just below the collar, on the back of the shirt, the 96 are remembered

WIN THE NEW LIVERPOOL FC HOME SHIRT!



Fancy celebrating Liverpool FC's 125th anniversary by winning a brand new commemorative home shirt? Then you're on the right page. To be in with a chance of winning our smart new richer red shirt simply email your answer to the following question and contact details to liverpoolfcmag@trinitymirror.com with 125 Shirt in the subject line.

In what year was Liverpool Football Club formed?
(a) 1882 (b) 1892 (c) 1902

The closing date is 31 May 2017 and winners will be notified soon after. Usual competition rules apply.

Last month's Terry McDermott book winners were: John Cato (Liverpool), Andrew Farrell (Wishaw), Stuart Gibbon (Sleaford), Roy Kelley (Liverpool), Joseph Stanley (Connah's Quay).



REDS ON INSTAGRAM

Rounding up some of the best posts from Reds players and fans

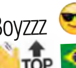




@dannymurphy13 @jjenas @bbcsport @motd_official great afternoon of football ahead with Top man JJ and Chappers. Watch us on MOTD2 tonight at 10.30 BBC1





@grujicmarko Boyzzz 😎😎😎 #alex  #lucas10yearsared 🔴👏  @leivalucas





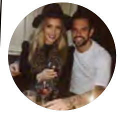
@jhenderson Great night last night......10 years a red @leivalucas ❤️



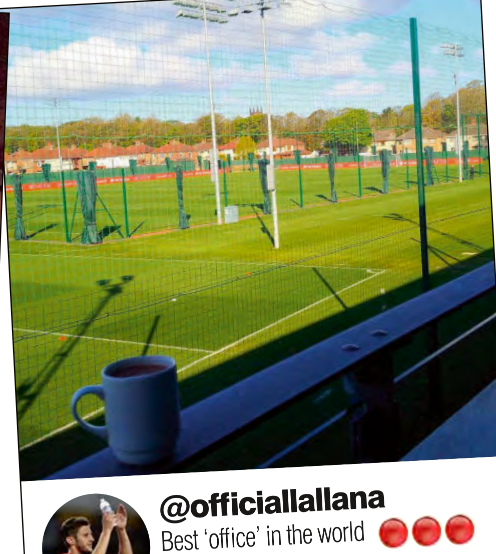


@anfieldaway We're so happy for our mates in @lfcnsw who just got the news that Klopp's taking the boys down under for a game against Sydney FC at the end of the season! Here we're flying their banner at the top of the Swartberg pass. Prince Albert, South Africa ☀️





@ingstagram10 Bit of scran with the man @officiallallana ⚽🔴



@officiallallana Best 'office' in the world 🔴🔴🔴



@nyc_kopites Come on you REDMEN!!! #LFC #LFCinNYC #NYC



@leivalucas We are Liverpool 👊 #myfamily #myfriends #wearereds



@nbfootball That feeling. When you wear the LiverBird on your chest. Presenting the #NBFootball @liverpoolfc 17-18 Home Kit #PureLFC



@divockorigi #22 merci #YNWA



@sport_media_tm Terry McDermott pictured with his new autobiograpghy at Aintree today!#terrymac #terrymcdermott #royevans #livingforthemoment #footballbook #autobiography

@luissuarez9 Never forget 🙏 Nunca olvidaremos 🙏 #jft96





@tashharding09 Now that's a lot of teeth in one photo ☐....☐ team photo day



@iamdanielsturridge Come through to Tinie's pop up. Good vibes!!!!! @disturbingidn @tiniegram



@liverpoolfc A unique history. An unforgettable journey. Our new home kit, celebrating 125 years of Liverpool Football Club #PureLFC



@Peter_hooton 26th April 2016

WHAT'S



ON: MAY

DOWN UNDER

A Liverpool squad including Steven Gerrard, Jamie Carragher, Steve McManaman and Daniel Agger will travel to Australia play a post-season friendly at the ANZ Stadium in Sydney on Wednesday 24 May.

Liverpool FC ambassador Ian Rush was in Sydney to make the announcement. "We have so many incredible fans in Australia and there is always a brilliant atmosphere when we play over here," he said.

"This is the first time the lads have played in Sydney and they're really looking forward to a great match against one of Australia's best A-League teams."

The game will also be the closest match to the Reds' 125th anniversary, which will be celebrated on 3 June 2017, and the historic milestone will be marked with activities in and around this special game.

TOP-FOUR TARGET

Liverpool's quest for Champions League football is set to go to the wire and two of the Reds' final three games will be played at Anfield. On Sunday 7 May, Jürgen Klopp's men host Southampton (1.30pm) and a fortnight later they bring the curtain down on the 2016/17 campaign against Middlesbrough (3pm) at home. Between those games is a first visit to West Ham United's London Stadium on Sunday 14 May (2.15pm).



PLAYERS' AWARDS

Anfield will stage the club's annual awards evening on Tuesday 9 May. The Carlsberg Dugout in the expanded Main Stand is set to provide the perfect backdrop for what promises to be a night to remember. Jürgen Klopp will be present together with his first-team squad, while Liverpool Ladies, Academy players and LFC legends will join them as the club reflects on the 2016/17 season and honours the individual success stories. Don't forget you can follow the event on liverpoolfc.com and LFCTV.



125 KIT LAUNCH

The new-look Liverpool FC home kit for 2017/18 goes on sale on Thursday 19 May. The deeper red shirt features the special 125 years crest and is already proving to be a huge hit with Reds fans. The strip has been launched as part of the 2017/18 'Pure Liverpool FC' campaign, to celebrate the Club's 125th anniversary and honour key figures and events that have featured throughout LFC's history.

A 125 training range was launched on 5 May featuring products carefully designed to mark the anniversary. To pre-order the kit or browse the training range, visit **store.liverpoolfc.com**.



Birthdays and anniversaries



Andre Wisdom 24 on 9 May
Cameron Brannagan 21 on 9 May
Adam Lallana 29 on 10 May
Tommy Lawrence 77 on 14 May
Howard Gayle 59 on 18 May
Jimmy Case 63 on 18 May
Torben Piechnik 54 on 21 May
Pedro Chirivella 20 on 23 May
Ryan Fulton 21 on 23 May
Joe Gomez 20 on 23 May
Nicky Tanner 52 on 24 May
Vladimir Smicer 44 on 24 May

39 years since Liverpool beat Bruges to successfully defend the European Cup on 10 May 1978

12 years since the Miracle of Istanbul on 25/26 May 2005

40 years since Liverpool claimed their first European Cup on 25 May 1977

36 years since Alan Kennedy gave the Reds European Cup no3 on 27 May 1981

32 years since Kenny Dalglish was appointed as player/manager on 30 May 1985.



The Reds do enough in a tricky return leg

It's 44 years since Liverpool defeated Borussia Moenchengladbach to win the UEFA Cup on 10 May 1973.

The 40th anniversary of LFC's first European Cup triumph – also against the German outfit – is covered elsewhere in this magazine, but in May 1973 the Reds claimed their first European trophy against those same opponents. Tommy Smith fulfilled the dream of every Liverpool-supporting local lad when he hoisted the UEFA Cup aloft at the Bokelbergstadion in Moenchengladbach after the Reds had survived a scare or two to win the trophy 3-2 on aggregate.

Bill Shankly's side had built up a 3-0 first leg advantage at Anfield with Kevin Keegan's first-half brace being added to by Larry Lloyd after the break. But Borussia gave the Reds a scare with two first-half goals from Jupp Heynckes making the aggregate score 3-2 with 50 minutes remaining. However, the Reds held on to record their first European triumph with Smith becoming the first Englishman to captain his team to the league title and a European trophy in the same season.

FIXTURES 2016/2017

AUGUST		
Sun 14	Arsenal (A)	4-3
Sat 20	Burnley (A)	0-2
Tue 23	Burton (A, EFL2)	5-0
Sat 27	Tottenham (A)	1-1
SEPTEMBER		
Sat 10	Leicester City (H)	4-1
Fri 16	Chelsea (A)	2-1
Tue 20	Derby (A, EFL3)	3-0
Sat 24	Hull City (H)	5-1
OCTOBER		
Sat 1	Swansea City (A)	2-1
Mon 17	Manchester Utd (H)	0-0
Sat 22	West Brom (H)	2-1
Tue 25	Tottenham (H, EFL4)	2-1
Sat 29	Crystal Palace (A)	4-2
NOVEMBER		
Sun 6	Watford (H)	6-1
Sat 19	Southampton (A)	0-0
Sat 26	Sunderland (H)	2-0
Tue 29	Leeds Utd (H, EFL5)	2-0
DECEMBER		
Sun 4	Bournemouth (A)	3-4
Sun 11	West Ham United (H)	2-2
Wed 14	Middlesbrough (A)	3-0
Mon 19	Everton (A, 8pm)	1-0
Tue 27	Stoke City (H)	4-1
Sat 31	Manchester City (H)	1-0
JANUARY		
Mon 2	Sunderland (A)	2-2
Sun 8	Plymouth (H, FAC3)	0-0
Wed 11	Southampton (A, EFL SF 1L)	0-1
Sun 15	Manchester Utd (A)	1-1
Sun 8	Plymouth (H, FAC3)	1-0
Sat 21	Swansea City (H)	2-3
Wed 25	Southampton (H, EFL SF 2L)	0-1
Sat 28	Wolves (H, FAC4)	1-2
Tue 31	Chelsea (H)	1-1
FEBRUARY		
Sat 4	Hull City (A)	0-2
Sat 11	Tottenham (H)	2-0
Mon 27	Leicester City (A)	1-3
MARCH		
Sat 4	Arsenal (H)	3-1
Sun 12	Burnley (H)	2-1
Sun 19	Manchester City (A)	1-1
APRIL		
Sat 1	Everton (H)	3-1
Wed 5	Bournemouth (H)	2-2
Sat 8	Stoke City (A)	2-1
Sun 16	West Brom (A)	1-0
Sun 23	Crystal Palace (H)	1-2
MAY		
Mon 1	Watford (A)	1-0
Sun 7	Southampton (H, 1.30pm)	
Sat 13	West Ham United (A, 3pm)	
Sun 21	Middlesbrough (H, 3pm)	

(LFC score shown first, all dates/KO times subject to change)



FOOTBALL

The boys from Brazil, rising stars, a trip down memory Lane and the Reds' first European Cup 40 years on...

The boss looks on intently during a recent Premier League game. How many competitive matches will he have taken charge of Liverpool FC in by the start of next season?

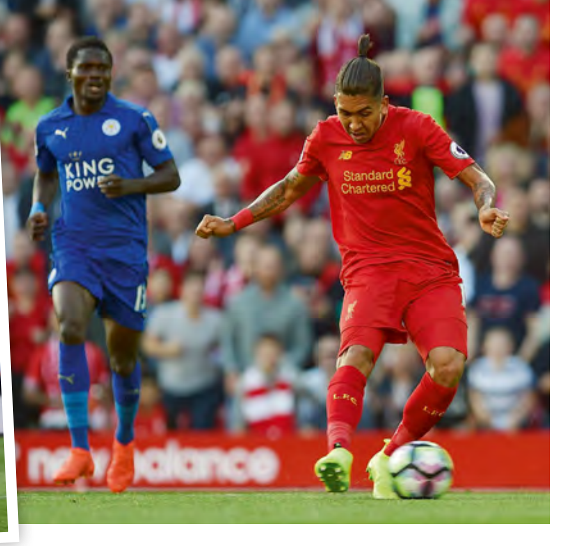
Answer on p98


11
L.F.C.

THE PHIL & BOBBY SHOW

Philippe Coutinho is now the all-time leading Brazilian goalscorer in the Premier League with 31, and Reds team-mate Roberto Firmino isn't far behind on 21. Here's a special samba salute to our Kop-acabana duo in 2016/17...





Coutinho's curler

Start the season as you mean to go on? Philippe Coutinho did precisely that down at The Emirates on the opening weekend of the 2016/17 Premier League as Liverpool beat Arsenal 4-3. The first wave of the magician's wand came on the stroke of half-time when he curled a brilliant 30-yard free-kick over the wall and past goalkeeper Petr Cech into the top bin. Ten minutes after the break Coutinho was on target again with a completely different finish, dashing in at the near post to turn Nathaniel Clyne's low cross into the Gunners goal in the blink of an eye. No wonder those familiar ole-oles rang out from the away end.

Gone for a Burton

Roberto Firmino's first goal of 2016/17 was at Burton Albion in the second round of the EFL Cup in August. In came Clyne's cross from the right and up popped Bobby six yards from goal to get his noggin to the ball before Brewers keeper Steven Bywater could lay a glove on it, to notch Liverpool's second of the night. The Reds ultimately ran out 5-0 winners, Firmino had his first-ever League Cup goal and it wasn't the last header he'd score with this season.

Main man

Kopites had to wait until September for a first glimpse of the Redmen while work on Anfield's towering new Main Stand was completed, and it was Bobby Firmino who had them on their feet first, as Premier League champions Leicester City were seen off by four goals to one. Running onto a James Milner pass, he turned inside defender Robert Huth before slotting home. And he wasn't done there, netting again in the 89th minute after Sadio Mane had beaten Kasper Schmeichel to the ball and teed Firmino up with the goal gaping.





Create...Shoot...Goal... Repeat

Remember Dejan Lovren's opening goal in our 2-1 Premier League win at Chelsea? It came from a pinpoint Coutinho cross. Remember Ragnar's opening goal in our 3-0 EFL Cup win at Derby? It came from a Coutinho corner. Remember Divock Origi's thumping finish at Derby? It came from a Coutinho pass. Little Phil also got on the scoresheet himself that night and it was Firmino's defence-opening pass that set him up, the first time the two had combined for a goal this season.



Easy Tiger

Hull City were handed a 5-1 hammering in September and it was Coutinho playing the role of chief Tiger tamer. He created Adam Lallana's opener with a neat pass and was only denied a goal himself by a fine one-handed save by Ahmed Elmohamady, who was promptly sent off as full-backs aren't allowed to stop shots with their arms. Milner converted the spot-kick, but Coutinho wasn't to be denied and curled home the Reds' fourth of the day, 25 yards from the Kop goal, before performing an unusual celebration routine with Firmino in which they covered their eyes and waved. It was inspired by Brazilian singer Wesley Safadao's hit *Fala Aqui Com A Minha Mao* (Talk Here With My Hand). "I love his songs and decided to make a tribute," admitted Bobby after mimicking the pop star's hand gestures.



Nice Swan, Bobby

Three points could've gone down the Swanee at Swansea if it wasn't for Firmino. Liverpool were a goal down in South Wales when Jordan Henderson lofted a pass into the box that Bobby

guided into the net with a glancing header before firing imaginary pistols with his hands as he celebrated in front of the travelling Kop. The Reds still need a winner, though, and it was Milner who struck it from the penalty spot after Firmino was bundled over in the box by Angel Rangel.



Dancing with the stars

The boys from Brazil stopped the Baggies boing-boing-ing at Anfield in October before busting a few moves of their own. Firmino created Liverpool's first for Mane with a chipped cross to the far post, and it was Coutinho who notched the winner in a 2-1 victory when he cut back inside the Albion penalty area and fired low past goalie Ben Foster at the near post. Coutinho, Firmino and Mane then celebrated with a two-step dance routine that entertained the Main Stand...but possibly wouldn't have got a 10 from Len on *Strictly Come Dancing*! "It was a new Brazilian dance and Philippe and Roberto tried to teach me it," said Mane. "The main teacher is Firmino – he taught me all the moves!"



Pumped at Palace

Speaking of celebrations, if you were in the Arthur Waite Stand at Selhurst Park on Saturday 29 October then you won't forget how Firmino marked his game-settling effort in a frantic 4-2 Liverpool win. Coutinho had already created headed goals for central defenders Dejan Lovren and Joel Matip but the game was only won when Firmino ran onto Henderson's pass and dinked the ball over Palace keeper Steve Mandanda. Off went Bobby's shirt, out came the fake pistols followed by a heart-shaped hand gesture. Then, with Coutinho and Mane alongside him, there was another rotuine inspired by Wesley Safadao. "Whenever there is a new song out we'll try to rehearse something so when one of us scores we can celebrate together," said Firmino. "I find this is a nice thing between team-mates to show the friendship between us."

Six-y football

Remember remember the Sixth of November – it was the first time Coutinho and Firmino scored in the same game this season as the Reds hit Watford for six. Coutinho created the first goal for Mane, Firmino created the second goal for Coutinho. Firmino got Liverpool's fourth from a Lallana cross before getting his second assist of the afternoon by teeing up Mane. He'd have had a third assist, too, if goalie Costel Pantilimon hadn't saved from Daniel Sturridge before Gini Wijnaldum stroked the rebound home. Watford simply couldn't live with the boys from Brazil.

Different double acts

After cracking in another Kop-end goal in the 4-1 win against Stoke, there was an unusual feeling for Firmino against Swansea at Anfield. He scored twice – a thumping header and a sublime chest-down and volley – but Liverpool were still beaten 3-2. It was the first and so far only time the Reds have lost in the 19 games Bobby has scored in. There was also a new experience for Coutinho in January – assisting a goal for Lucas! He curled in a corner and the long-server arrived at the front post to head home the FA Cup third-round replay winner at Plymouth, and his first goal since September 2010 when Philippe was an 18-year-old at Inter Milan and Firmino was a 19-year-old Figueirense player!



Red Rooster

It's not just on the football pitch where Firmino and Coutinho team up. To celebrate Chinese New Year – the Year of the Rooster – they took on Jürgen Klopp and UK University champion Liu Haoyu in a best-of-three table tennis match at Melwood. The Brazilians won the first set 11-9 but lost the second set 11-7, setting up a third-set decider that finished 11-5 to Klopp and Liu Haoyu with the manager hitting the winning shot himself. You had to let the boss win though, right lads?



Outgunning Arsenal

Early March and Liverpool 3 Arsenal 1 was one of the Anfield highlights of the season and saw Coutinho assist Firmino's opening strike without touching the ball. Mane crossed from the right towards Phil, but with Bobby in space behind him he let the ball run through his legs for his mate to fire in at the far post. Firmino returned the compliment to Mane shortly afterwards, sliding the ball across the penalty area for the Senegalese star to flash the ball past Petr Cech.

Between them Coutinho and Firmino have now score five goals in LFC's last three games against Arsenal.



Three of the best

Shared thousands of times on social media, a photo of Coutinho, Mane and Firmino celebrating the Reds's second goal in the thrilling 3-1 Merseyside derby win against Everton at Anfield is one of the images of the season. While Anfield was going bonkers around them after Coutinho had curled the ball home to make it 2-1 (Firmino had created the first for Mane), the attacking trio paused to take in the adulation like they were statues in *Another Place*. Divock Origi's clincher from Coutinho's clever pass made it a Saturday night to remember with the Brazilian boys only arriving back from international duty after a 12-hour flight on a private plane two days before the derby.

Super subs

After combining for Coutinho's goal in the 2-2 home draw against Bournemouth, the Brazilian duo were handed a rest at Stoke City. But with the Reds a goal behind at half-time they were summoned into action. Talk about game-changing subs. The little magician conjured up a 70th-minute equaliser and with the travelling Kop still singing and dancing Firmino thumped a stunning 25-yard volley high into the Potters net. The bare-chested Brazilian celebrated in front of the away end and it was the first time two subs had scored in the same PL game for LFC since Fernando Torres and Dirk Kuyt at Portsmouth in 2009.

Record breakers

Coutinho's goal at Stoke made him the all-time leading Brazilian goalscorer in Premier League history on 30 – one more than Middlesbrough's Juninho – and goal no31 came via another perfectly curled free-kick at home to Crystal Palace. A week earlier Firmino had scored his 12th of the season – his best tally since joining the Reds – by glancing home another header from a Lucas flick-on to secure Liverpool's first league win at West Bromwich Albion since 2011. Here's hoping they add to their records before the season ends...



"I'LL BE BETTER THAN EVER"





On his road to recovery Reds striker Sadio thanks the fans and vows to come back with a bang

The Reds have missed his pace and power since he was ruled out through injury – but Sadio Mane says Liverpool supporters can expect even more from him when he returns to action for next season.

The 25-year-old forward had knee surgery recently, following the injury he sustained against Everton in the Anfield derby on Saturday 1 April, and he's been inundated with good wishes from fans, fellow footballers and admirers all over the world.

"It's great that I have received so many encouraging messages, particularly on social media," he said. "It makes me proud and gives me so much power that so many supporters of Liverpool and Senegal give me such great support. I'd like to say thank you to everyone.

"I will give my very best to be back on the pitch as soon as possible and be even better than before."

There was another boost for Mane in the form of his inclusion in the PFA Premier League Team of the Year. The season, cut short though it's been, has seen him score 13 goals and provide five assists for the Reds in 27 Premier League appearances during his debut campaign at Anfield.

Liverpool Ladies midfielder Caroline Weir, meanwhile, was included in the PFA WSL Team of the Year.

PFA members from 100 clubs (from the Premier League, Football League and WSL) cast their votes to decide the teams, with the Premier League and WSL sides as follows:

Premier League: David de Gea (Manchester United); Kyle Walker (Tottenham Hotspur), David Luiz, Gary Cahill (both Chelsea), Danny Rose (Tottenham); N'Golo Kante (Chelsea), Dele Alli (Tottenham), Eden Hazard (Chelsea), Sadio Mane (Liverpool); Harry Kane (Tottenham), Romelu Lukaku (Everton).

WSL: Mary Earps (Reading FC Women); Lucy Bronze, Jenny Beattie, Steph Houghton (all Manchester City Women), Jess Carter (Birmingham City Ladies); Karen Carney (Chelsea Ladies), Jill Scott (Manchester City Women), Jordan Nobbs (Arsenal Ladies), Caroline Weir (Liverpool Ladies); Jane Ross (Manchester City Women), Eniola Aluko (Chelsea Ladies).

ALONG CAME SHANKS

"We never bothered with sand dunes and hills and roads, we trained on grass where football is played…" So said Bill Shankly, pictured here about to take training on Tuesday 11 July 1972, ahead of a season in which his Reds will win both the League and the UEFA Cup. By the start of the Seventies, Melwood was unrecognisable from the "sorry wilderness" that Shanks had inherited when he was appointed Liverpool FC manager in December 1959 (he'd subsequently live nearby, of course, in the city suburb of West Derby). In his autobiography he'd write: "One pitch looked as if a couple of bombs had been dropped on it [and there were] trees, hills, hollows and grass long enough for Jimmy Melia to hide in standing up! But I said to my wife Ness: 'It's big and it can be developed, at least there is space here'."Bill had an all-weather pitch installed as well as target-boards to improve shooting and passing accuracy. It was all about working with the ball, playing mainly five-a-sides, and always on grass. "What Bill set down changed very little under managers like Bob Paisley and Joe Fagan," the late, great Ronnie Moran would later say. "But why change a winning formula?" And that winning formula was largely thanks to the original members of the Boot Room, pictured in 1971 opposite, with Shankly joined by Paisley, Fagan, Moran, Reuben Bennett and Tom Saunders after signing a new three-year contract.

MEN AT WORK

With proposals for a new training HQ recently revealed, we celebrate Reds managers past and present on duty at Melwood



HEY JOE

Monday 30 July 1984. With one of Melwood's old concrete walls in the background, first-team boss Joe Fagan – wearing a no13 shirt and with his socks rolled down – watches his players limber-up for the start of pre-season training, among them new signing Paul Walsh. The preceding term, Joe's first in charge, had seen the Reds scoop a treble of League, European Cup and League Cup.

EVANS ABOVE

When Graeme Souness stood down at Reds boss in January 1994, the job went to Boot Room veteran Roy Evans, a fixture at the club for 28 years. His first day at Melwood as manager was captured here, Roy sharing a joke with (left to right) Rob Jones, Neil Ruddock, Bruce Grobbelaar and Steve McManaman. The shot below shows Evans at the training-ground over four years later, in October 1998, by which time he'd become joint-manager with Gerard Houllier.


GH
Reebok
SL
Reebok



GED THE RED

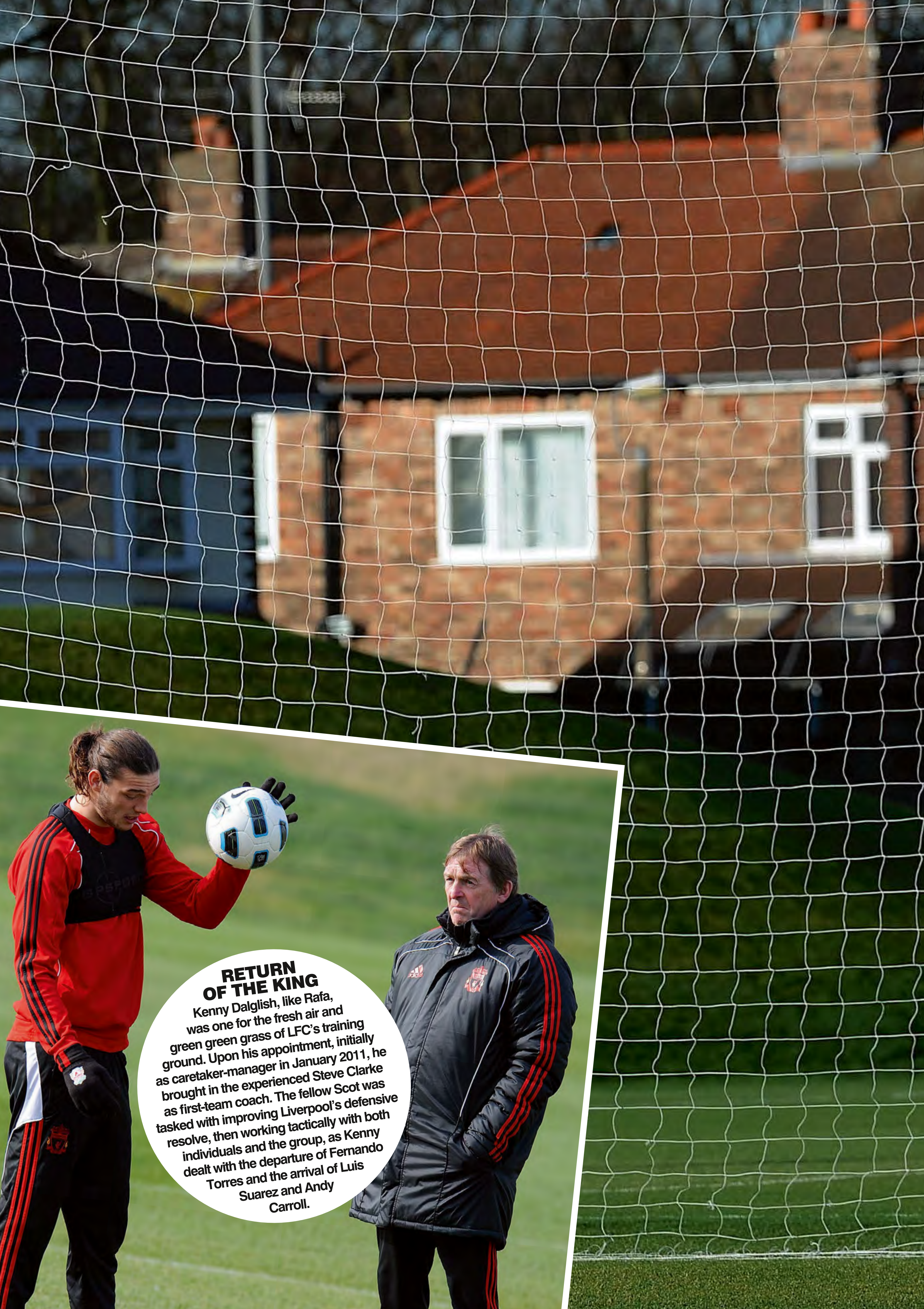
All change at Anfield – and Melwood – for the start of season 1999/2000. By then Gerard Houllier had become sole manager and big names like Paul Ince, David James, Jason McAteer, Rob Jones, and Steve McManaman had all left the club. Houllier is pictured here top-left, in early August 1999, but how many other faces can you recognise going through their drills? It was Houllier who would instigate a major renovation project of Melwood, including the design of what became known as 'the Millennium Pavilion'. "There will be new changing areas, a gymnasium, swimming pools, saunas, a hydrotherapy pool and rehabilitation rooms," he announced when the plans were revealed. "It will be more in tune with what a club of this standard wants to achieve."


RB



RAFA THE GAFFER

Rafael Benitez was a regular tracksuited-and-booted presence on the practice pitches at Melwood during his reign as LFC boss from the summer of 2004 to that of 2010. He'd oversee sessions while right-hand man and fitness specialist Pako Ayestaran put the players through their paces. Rafa changed routines rather than Melwood's physical appearance, for example providing rooms for players to rest in the afternoon ahead of an evening kick-off.



RETURN OF THE KING

Kenny Dalglish, like Rafa, was one for the fresh air and green green grass of LFC's training ground. Upon his appointment, initially as caretaker-manager in January 2011, he brought in the experienced Steve Clarke as first-team coach. The fellow Scot was tasked with improving Liverpool's defensive resolve, then working tactically with both individuals and the group, as Kenny dealt with the departure of Fernando Torres and the arrival of Luis Suarez and Andy Carroll.


KD
KD



BRENDAN'S THE BOSS

The hard yards behind Liverpool's thrilling Premier League title charge of 2013/14 were put in by Brendan Rodgers and his backroom staff at Melwood. An article on the BBC's football homepage in April 2014 noted: "A look around Rodgers' office [at the training ground] is revealing. On the walls are black-and-white images of past managerial masters: Bill Shankly at Anfield, one finger raised in celebration; Bob Paisley holding the league trophy aloft; Kenny Dalglish; Ronnie Moran – the men who set the tone for the club…

"On his desk, colour-coded files hold the secrets behind the transformation – the tactical intelligence, hunting in packs, pace on the counter-attack. Detail is everything and each training session is planned meticulously, with a four-day schedule designed to lead the players into game day. He is now planning to re-lay the pitch at Anfield and those at Melwood to make them quicker, allowing Liverpool's passing even more zip. Nothing is left to chance."



Lucozade Sport



BOOM!

Jürgen Klopp is very much a social animal, not least at Melwood where his energy and enthusiasm clearly rubs off on the first-team squad. But he will also keep his distance when necessary, taking a broader strategic view of proceedings while his assistant-coaches Zeljko Buvac and Peter Krawietz organise sessions with the players…just as Shankly operated with right-hand men Bob Paisley and Joe Fagan all those years ago.



THE FUTURE

Liverpool FC's vision is to bring its first-team and Academy football training operations and facilities together on one site, meaning a potential move for Klopp and co from Melwood to a redeveloped Kirkby HQ. "I really love Melwood but football changes," says the boss. "[But] we can't stay like we always were and hope we can compete with the other clubs. It's really good that our owners give us the opportunity to make this big step in the future."Twenty five years ago Melwood set the level. In those 25 years a lot of things happened. It's fantastic but we have no space for anything… Bringing the Academy and the first team together is one point but it's also about improving a lot of things that we can't improve here."It will only be good for the future of the club. In this moment we have the idea and the opportunity to do something, so we have to wait to see when we can say 'Yes, take the next step and start'."

NATIO TREAS

Ragnar Klavan is a footballing hero back home in Estonia, and he's made quite an impact on Reds fans too with his assured displays

Ragnar Klavan threw his shirt into the crowd after Liverpool's 3-1 win over Arsenal in early March. The reason: he'd recognised some familiar tones in the crowd while going through his pre-match routine: a group of supporters had travelled from Estonia to watch the game.

"The fans were actually from my hometown and they gave me a shirt from my first club, Tulevik, with my name on it," he reveals. "I was lucky that I heard them when we had the warm-up so I knew where they were sitting and that's why I found them at the end because it is normally difficult to spot people when there are so many of them around!"

Klavan is the current and four-time Estonian player of the year, and his career at Anfield is big news back home in part because of a trail blazed before him by a fellow countryman. "Premier League football is big at home," says Ragnar. "Mart Poom was the first Estonian player ever to play in the Premier League [mostly with Derby County]. When I was growing up I was always trying to watch Poom's games but back then it wasn't so easy. In those days when games were on television, it was something special for me and the whole country to see him play.

"That's why I was always dreaming about playing in the Premier League. He was one of my idols growing up and I later played some games together with him in the Estonia national team so that was cool; to grow up idolising him and then to finally play with him was really nice.



Leading out his country against England in a Euro 2016 qualifier


L.F.C.

"When I was around 11 or 12, he came to my home town [Viljandi] and gave a little training session for us at the time when he was playing in England. When I later got to play with him, we had a little conversation where I told him about that and I explained how it was something special for me to see him in the flesh and train with him."

Ultimately Poom's progress helped persuade the teenage Ragnar to choose football over another favourite sport. "I played quite a bit of basketball when I was younger. At 14 or 15 you need to make a decision about what you are going to stick with because at that point it isn't possible to do two training sessions to the same level, and it's at that time when you get more serious.

"So I sat down with the family and decided football is the way to go. I always loved football and it maybe helped that my dad was a footballer! [Dzintar was a midfielder who won 19 caps for Estonia]."

All things being equal, early next season Klavan will surpass goalkeeper Poom's total of 120 caps for his country. Ragnar has been the proud captain of Estonia for a dozen years and took his own tally to 118 when he led them to a 3-0 friendly win over Croatia in Tallinn at the end of March.

He'll go fifth in his country's all-time total of appearance-makers if he overtakes Poom. But he remains some way off the man at the top of that particular list: current national-team manager Martin Reim, a central midfielder who pulled on the Estonia jersey 157 times.

It is typical of Klavan's selfless approach to the game that he says he would be happy if he didn't come close to Reim's total. "Yes, it is a big possibility that I will take over Mart Poom but there are many players ahead of me who have 150 or something. In a perfect world the honest answer to whether I'd like Martin Reim's record is no!

"The reason I say that is that I'm 31 now and hoping that good young players will come through and I will be in the way so they push me out and I will not make it. Hopefully the talented younger players will see this as extra motivation to kick me out!

"For example, if you look at Wales, Ben Woodburn has just been called into their squad and while I am not comparing Wales with Estonia, we are hopeful that we too will have good young players coming through.

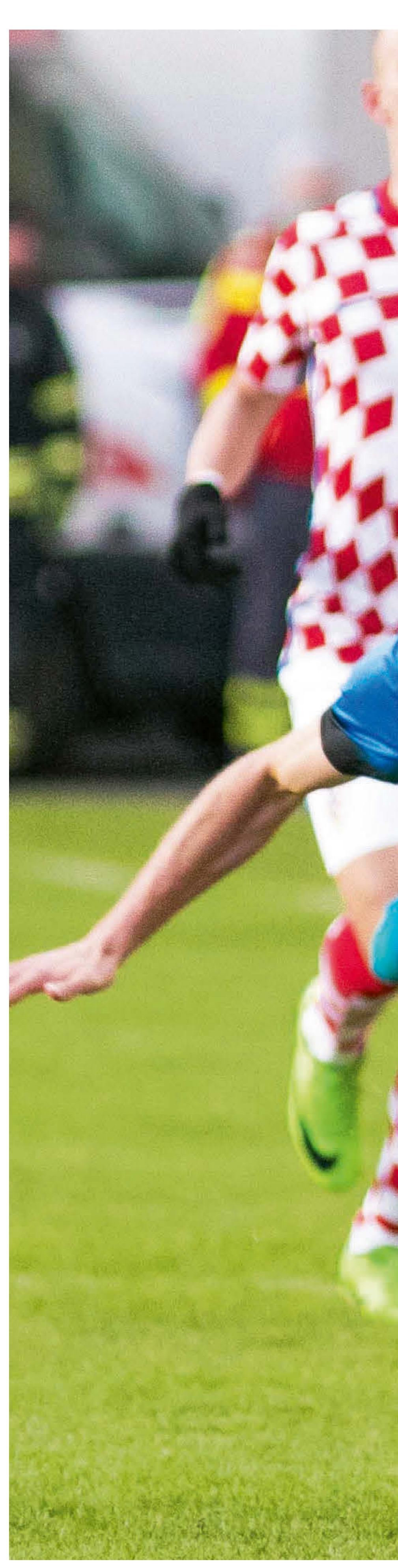
"WALES HAVE BEN WOODBURN AND WE WANT YOUNG PLAYERS COMING THROUGH FOR ESTONIA"

Making your debut for your country was a really, really special moment for me and if Ben gets the chance to do that soon, it will be something he will remember for the rest of his life."

On the domestic front, Klavan has adapted well to life in England, even if he believes himself to be unspectacular. Asked who would play the lead role if a film were to be made about his life, he shows trademark self-deprecation.

"First of all, that is going to be a really boring movie because my life is not so interesting! I am a hard-working person but who wants to see a guy who is working hard every day? They want to see some excitement, maybe some crazy parties or so on!

"People may think: oh a Premier League footballer, playing for Liverpool



Ragnar in action in an international friendly against Croatia in March



Mart Poom in goal for Estonia in 1992




THOMSON
HD
DPM
LFC
BETVICTOR
L.F.C.

Klavan off the coach

FC – how exciting. But then they would make the movie and would see me just training, sleeping, and eating. Nobody wants to pay money for that! On YouTube kids like to see people doing cool tricks or things but I don't have anything like that in my repertoire.

"Who would play me? Who is the most boring actor in the world? I'm not going to name any names because the person would probably be offended after that build-up!"

But while he may not be as box-office as some, Ragnar has been a smash with Liverpool supporters in his debut campaign. A strong work-ethic and leading by example on and off the pitch were key qualities that persuaded Jürgen Klopp to bring him in from FC Augsburg last July. Now the centre-back believes he has adapted to what he believes to be the most competitive league in European football.

"It is a little bit of a different league to get used to, but it is really special and I think that is why so many people around the world enjoy watching it. It's so competitive with all the teams. During my four years in Germany there were normally only two or three clubs at a maximum who were fighting for the championship, but here there are six or seven teams who could become champions. A lot of the teams have so much quality and that makes this league more attractive.

"WHO'D PLAY ME IN A MOVIE ABOUT MY LIFE? WHO'S THE MOST BORING ACTOR IN THE WORLD?!"

"You can't underestimate any of the teams in the Premier League whereas, for example, it is maybe a bit different for Bayern Munich in the German league. They can maybe focus on the Champions League if it comes in a week when they have to play one of the lower sides in the Bundesliga. Here, you have to be at 100 per cent in every game – or you don't make it."

That level of competition has been evident all season. The Reds went into their final three matches pushing hard for a top-four spot in the table with Klavan and his team-mates striving to ensure Anfield stages Champions League football in 2017/18.

"Of course finishing in the top four is important for us because we want to play European football next year, for sure. Now, the final few fixtures are going to be the most important and we have to focus on them game by game. We need to look after those and then whoever are the best four teams will show that at the end of the season with their rankings in the table.

"You can see that we have lost a lot of points to teams in the lower side of the table this season, while we have done really well against the top teams. Every match is really important and we need to treat each of the remaining games as if it is the last one."

And on a more personal note, he concludes, "I want to be important for this club. Whatever that role is going to be, I want to be there for this team. Whenever I am needed, I am going to be there and this is how it is.

"When the manager says, 'You play', then you play. When the manager says, 'You don't play', then you wait for an opportunity and you work hard on the training pitch knowing that you are going to get your chance when you do things right."



Another boss performance

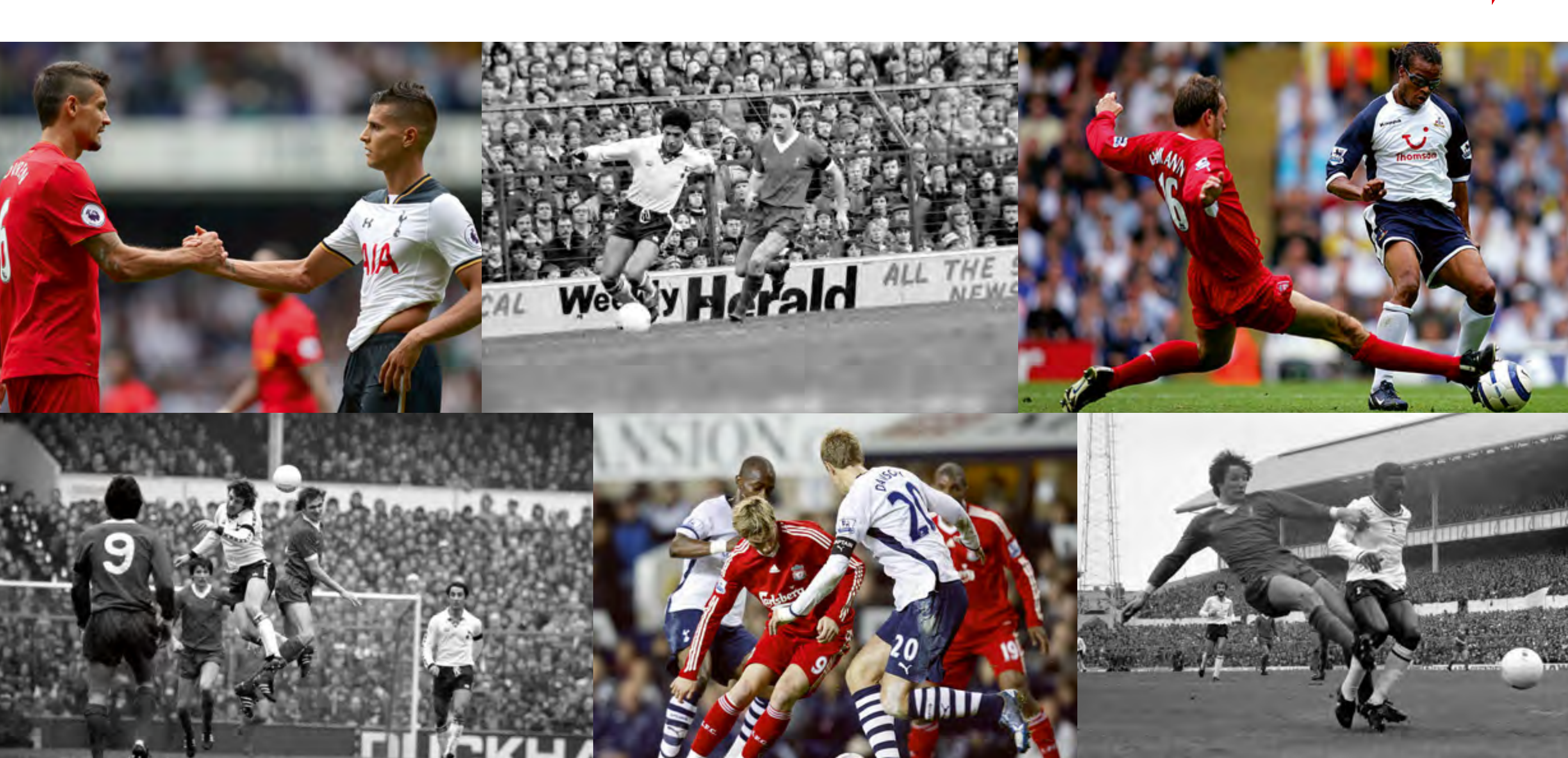
MEMOR

With a new stadium taking shape next door, Tottenham Horspur's White Hart Lane, as we know it, will be no



Y LANE

more at the end of this season. Here are 20 of Liverpool's most memorable matches there…



Tottenham 1 Liverpool 0

First Division, 13 November 1909

Tottenham Hotspur moved into White Hart Lane in 1898, but only after Liverpool had won promotion to Division One in 1908/09 did they visit for the first time. It didn't go well. The home side's Bert Middlemiss scored the only goal on the hour and LIverpool's Scottish forward Ronald Orr missed a 90th-minute penalty. "Orr, who had been throughout the match astoundingly accurate with his kicking, sent the ball over the bar," reported the *Liverpool Echo*. The Reds lost five and drew two of their first seven visits and scored just once in a 1-1 draw in 1915.

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 1

First Division, 22 October 1921

With goalkeeper Elisha Scott, defender Tommy Lucas and midfielder Bill Lacey all away on international duty, defeat seemed on the cards for manager David Ashworth's Liverpool. Instead they recorded their first victory at White Hart Lane. The goal came in the 65th minute when Dick Forshaw struck the bar and Harry Beadles headed in the rebound. "Congratulations to the Anfielders on breaking a record at Tottenham," wrote 'F.E.H', the *Echo* correspondent. "It is a great feather in Liverpool's cap that they should have gained the day by dogged and determined rather than showy football. The balance of the side struck some of the London critics with wonder and a journalist, world-famous in sporting circles, told me he had not seen so good a side in the matter of defence for a long time." Liverpool went on to win the league, Spurs finished second.

Tottenham 7 Liverpool 2

First Division, 15 April 1963

Three times the Reds have conceded seven goals or more since the end of World War II. Most recent was this 7-2 reverse at the Lane on Easter Monday 1963 – three days after beating Spurs 5-2 at Anfield. Roger Hunt got both Liverpool goals to make it 1-1 and 4-2, but it was Jimmy Greaves who stole the show netting four of Tottenham's seven with Cliff Jones (2) and Frank Saul also scoring. "If Greaves hadn't scored four we should've won," quipped Bill Shankly.

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 3

First Division, 27 March 1964

Only two Liverpool players ever scored hat-tricks at White Hart Lane: Billy Liddell in 1951, and Roger Hunt on Good Friday 1964 during a vital 3-1 win – the second of seven in a row that propelled the Bill Shankly boys to the First Division title. "I always liked playing at Tottenham, they had one of those big double-decker stands," recalled 'Sir Roger'. "They'd put seven past us the year before and beating them on Good Friday set us off on a run. Their defence was not as good as the previous year and I was given so much time that I was able to bag a hat-trick. Everything I did seemed to come off, it was just one of those games."

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 1

FA Cup sixth-round replay, 16 March 1971

No club had beaten Spurs in an FA Cup replay at White Hart Lane for 60 years, so this was quite a feat for Liverpool after the two sides had drawn 0-0 at Anfield. A crowd of 56,000 saw Stevie Heighway score the only goal in the 25th minute when he touched John Toshack's flick-on over the line. Hero of the night, however, was Ray Clemence who produced several fine saves. 'He doesn't usually have that much to do!" claimed Shankly. "Clemence proved tonight that he is a successor to Gordon Banks."

Tottenham 2 Liverpool 1

UEFA Cup semi-final second leg, 25 April 1973

Spurs were UEFA Cup holders when paired with Liverpool in the 1973 semi-final and although Alec Lindsay gave the Reds a first-leg advantage, a frenetic game in North London followed. Martin Peters levelled the tie three minutes after half-time but the



Reds hat-trick hero Roger Hunt on target in March 1964

Words: Chris McLoughlin

Terry Mac's FA Cup winner of March 1980

decisive moment came on 55 minutes when Kevin Keegan teed up Stevie Heighway to slot the ball home. Peters got a second to set up a frantic finale, but Liverpool held on to reach a first UEFA Cup final.

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 1

First Division, 8 May 1974

Rescheduled from January, this fixture took place four days after Liverpool's FA Cup final win against Newcastle United and it became historic – although nobody knew at the time. Bill Shankly sat in the stand rather than the dugout and it proved to be his 766th and final game in charge of the Reds. He handed a debut to Max Thompson, who became LFC's youngest-ever player aged 17 years and 129 days. But it was a goal from Stevie Heighway, his fourth in four years at White Hart Lane, that earned Liverpool a point. Shanks resigned two months and four days later.

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 4

First Division, 13 December 1975

Bob Paisley's team had managed only seven goals in their opening nine away league games in 1975/76, but they found their goalscoring form here despite Pat Jennings being in Tottenham's goal. Kevin Keegan nodded in shortly before the interval then Jimmy Case made it 2-0 from the edge of the box. Phil Neal struck his first goal away from Anfield and Stevie Heighway continued his remarkable run of scoring at White Hart Lane when heading home a late corner. It was the first time Liverpool had scored four in an away game under Paisley's management. "The game ended with Tottenham almost screaming for mercy, with many of their fans long since departed," reported the *Liverpool Daily Post*. "The referee blasted a merciful relief with the total at four, it might have been six."

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 2

FA Cup sixth round, 8 March 1980

Terry McDermott was named as PFA Player of the Year and Football Writers' Footballer of the Year in 1980 and he also scored one of the goals of the season – a rasping volley after flicking the ball up for himself – to settle this quarter-final. "When the ball came out to me just outside the area, I thought: why not, let's have a crack," he recalls in his new autobiography *Terry Mac: Living For The Moment*. "I knew as soon as I connected it had a chance, because it felt just right and soared




Carlsberg
11
Thomson

into the net. There was even applause from some of the Tottenham fans and that goal is still talked about to this day as one of the competition's greatest strikes."

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 2
First Division, 2 March 1986

Liverpool landed a first league and FA Cup double in 1985/86 but only after winning 11 of their final 12 league games to pip Everton to the title. That run started with this 2-1 win at Tottenham and skipper Alan Hansen reckons Ian Rush's 90th-minute winner changed everything: "The turning point of the entire season was Rushie's goal at White Hart Lane. It was a frosty day and the pitch was minging. With 90 minutes on the clock the score was 1-1, but then Rushie took a pass from Ronnie Whelan and fired it past Ray Clemence. I'll tell you something now: if Rushie hadn't scored that last-minute goal we were gone, finished. We'd never have turned it all around. We came into the dressing-room at full-time sensing that all was not lost. I remember sitting there thinking: maybe we're still in with a chance here."

Liverpool 2 Southampton 0
FA Cup semi-final, 5 April 1986

Back in the days when FA Cup semi-finals were held at neutral grounds other than Wembley, White Hart Lane was selected for double-chasing Liverpool's encounter with Southampton. Kenny Dalglish was named manager of the month before kick-off, but it took two Ian Rush goals in extra-time to set up the first all-Merseyside FA Cup final. Midfielder Jan Molby said: "When Rush is scoring goals we are a different team. He is the best in Europe – the most consistent scorer of them all. My number one ambition when I came to England was to play in the FA Cup final at Wembley. It means more to me than winning the League."

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 2
First Division, 28 November 1987

Kenny Dalglish's Reds arrived at the Lane unbeaten in 15 games from the start of the season. They faced a Spurs side galvanized by the appointment of Terry Venables as manager, but an early red card for Steve Hodge put the hosts on the back-foot, as Dalglish recalled in his 1988 book *The Liverpool Year*: "We had to go into the game without Peter Beardsley, whose knee injury meant that Paul Walsh started. Both of our goals came from lay-offs by John Aldridge, highlighting the fact he is a maker as well as a taker of opportunities. When he knocked it to Steve McMahon it gave Steve the chance to collect his fifth goal of the season, and Craig Johnston turned in Aldo's flick-on from Steve Nicol's cross. We thoroughly deserved this victory and it was pleasing to have kept an eighth clean-sheet in our last 10 league outings."

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 3
First Division, 4 November 1990

Italia 90 hero Paul Gascoigne was seen as the biggest threat to top-of-the-table Liverpool, but Kenny Dalglish produced a tactical masterstroke by playing left-back David Burrows as a man-marker in central midfield. Not only did 'Bugsy' keep Gazza quiet – the Spurs midfielder was even booked for fouling him – he also created one of Ian Rush's two goals, with Peter Beardsley getting the third after Gary Lineker had pulled one back. "Paul Gascoigne again showed his limitations against tight marking," wrote *The Guardian*. "Dalglish ordered Burrows to stick close to him [and] Gascoigne's frustration at being denied time on the ball frequently approached boiling point."

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 3
Premier League, 26 August 1995

Roy Evans' Reds ripped Tottenham to bits with some free-flowing football as John Barnes scored an unusual 'hat-trick'. Digger netted twice before the break to reach a century of goals for LFC, but his third on a sunny North London afternoon was a late own-goal after a peroxide-blonde Robbie Fowler had made it 3-0. It was Liverpool's first Premier League win at the Lane and Evans fielded questions about his team's title credentials. "We are in the frame and people are saying we are among the favourites, but last year they said we had no chance. We didn't listen to them then and it is pointless to



Robbie Fowler makes it three in August 1995





Heskey heads home in March 2003

Cup-tie kids through in December 2004

talk about titles now. All I will say is that with all things being equal, we have as good a chance as anyone." The Reds finished third.

Tottenham 2 Liverpool 3

Premier League, 16 March 2003

Between December 1996 and December 2006 Liverpool only won once in N17 – and it was this 3-2 thriller with all five goals coming in the second half of a game marred by a running battle between El-Hadji Diouf and Tottenham's fiery full-back Mauricio Taricco. The outstanding Steven Gerrard crossed for both Michael Owen and Emile Heskey to overturn Taricco's opener before scoring a brilliant third himself on the counter-attack, running the length of the White Hart Lane pitch to fire home. Teddy Sheringham pulled one back for the home side.

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 1 (3-4 pens)

League Cup fifth round, 1 December 2004

David Raven and Mark Smyth were debutants as Rafael Benitez fielded a mix of squad players and youngsters for this quarter-final – the only Tottenham-Liverpool match that has ever gone to penalties. Jerzy Dudek produced some fine saves to take the game to extra-time, and although Jermain Defoe put Spurs ahead, Florent Sinama-Pongolle's 117th-minute penalty took the tie to spot-kicks. Stephane Henchoz (with his final kick in a LFC shirt), Richie Partridge and John Welsh all netted, so when Dudek saved from Fredi Kanoute and Michael Brown missed it was left to Flo to send the Reds through. 'It's unbelievable, I feel numb," he said after converting for a second time past Paul Robinson. "I'm so happy for everyone as we worked so hard, it's the highlight of my Liverpool career so far."



Record-breaker Torres in May 2008

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 2

Premier League, 11 May 2008

On the final day of the 2007/08 season Liverpool arrived at White Hart Lane with Fernando Torres needing one more goal to break Ruud van Nistelrooy's Premier League record of the most scored in a debut season by an overseas player (23). He got it in the 74th minute after skipping past Michael Dawson and prodding home to add to Andriy Voronin's opener. "Torres and I talked before the game and he said he wanted to play here and to score," said Rafa Benitez. "For him the most important thing was to break the record."



Suarez opens Liverpool's account in December 2013


Moreno magic in August 2014

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 5

Premier League, 15 December 2013

Luis Suarez captained Liverpool in Steven Gerrard's absence and scored twice to secure the Reds' biggest-ever win at White Hart Lane. The result handed Spurs – who failed to have a shot on target over the course of the match – their worst home defeat in 16 years, prompting the sacking of boss Andre Villas-Boas. For the visitors, Jordan Henderson, Jon Flanagan and Raheem Sterling were also on the scoresheet and it was full-back and local lad Flanno that manager Brendan Rodgers singled out for praise: "His goal was an absolutely brilliant finish. I'm delighted for him, he's a real good boy and you can see how much it means for him and the supporters."


The skipper scores from the spot in August 2014

Tottenham 0 Liverpool 3

Premier League, 31 August 2014

Brendan Rodgers celebrated his 100th game as Liverpool manager with a 3-0 victory, Mario Balotelli made his LFC debut and Alberto Moreno netted his first goal for the club. But it was Steven Gerrard who made history when slotting home a 49th-minute penalty after Raheem Sterling had made it 1-0. It was Stevie's 43rd successfully-converted spot-kick, putting him one ahead of Jan Molby on the all-time list. It also made him the first Red to have scored in 16 consecutive seasons, eclipsing Billy Liddell's previous club-record of 15. "Jan was a player my dad loved and I learned a lot watching him as a kid," he said. "My first Liverpool game was the one against Coventry City in the League Cup in 1986 when he scored three penalties. It's really flattering to be named in the same breath as him."

Tottenham 1 Liverpool 1

Premier League, 27 August 2016

And so, 107 years after first playing there, Liverpool's final visit to White Hart Lane came last August and ended in a 1-1 draw. It was a match that Jürgen Klopp's men could have won. Philippe Coutinho missed a great chance, Joel Matip hit the bar and Sadio Mane had a goal ruled out for offside. James Milner became our last goalscorer at the Lane with a 43rd-minute penalty, only for Danny Rose to equalise. Liverpool's final record at White Hart Lane reads: played 84, won 27, drew 18, lost 39, scored 105, conceded 113.


Standard Chartered
new balance
BETVICTOR
Standard Chartered
COOMBS
8
LFC
Vitality



SOUTHERN COMFORT

She's the girl from down south who's proved a hit up north – now Ladies midfielder Laura has the Champions League in her sights

Laura Coombs cut a happy figure as she touched the This Is Anfield sign outside the new home dressing-room at the Reds' historic home.

The midfielder spent a productive year with Liverpool Ladies last season on loan from Chelsea but had wondered what her future held when she suffered a broken foot towards the end of the 2016 campaign during a win over Doncaster Rovers Belles.

The 26-year-old felt settled on Merseyside as part of Scott Rogers' new-look team, so she was understandably delighted when the Reds' boss swooped to capture her return on a permanent basis last month ahead of the start of the FA Women's Super League Spring Series.

"I wanted to make sure that my foot was right before I decided on my future," she explains. "After I got that sorted, I was very open to coming back to Liverpool. I was really happy here last year and got on well with the team. They had great ambition and I thought that I'd be happy here in the long-term so I decided I'd like to come back. Thankfully Scott took me!

"I surprised myself last year at how quickly I fitted in. I've never really lived away from the south of England before but I liked it up here. The people are so friendly and there is a nice atmosphere


Laura signing autographs for young supporters

around the place so I didn't see any problem coming back."

Gravesend-born Laura, who has a degree in Human Resources, has been joined by former Notts County and England forward Jess Clarke as late additions to the Reds' squad before the spring transfer-window closed.

"Jess is a very tricky winger who has great speed and a great engine and I think that she's a great addition to the squad," she adds. "When I've come up against Notts in previous seasons, she was always their most dangerous player and the player that everyone worried could do some damage so it's great that she's here now. Our front three is going to be ridiculously fast and I think that will worry a lot of opposing teams."

The Reds have made a promising start to their Spring Series campaign with a 4-1 defeat of Yeovil Town





Back in action for the Reds

You beauty!

Liverpool Ladies Football Club announced a groundbreaking shirt sponsorship deal with women's beauty and cosmetics company, Avon Products Inc, ahead of the WSL Spring Series.

The three-year deal is the first agreement of its kind for LLFC and will see Avon become the first independent shirt sponsor to grace the front of the Reds shirt.

Established in 1886, Avon will become the first female-focused brand to sponsor a premier ladies football team. Through the partnership, Avon will also become Liverpool Ladies FC's principal partner, as well as the club's official ladies' beauty partner.

Billy Hogan, managing director and chief commercial officer of Liverpool Football Club, said: "We are thrilled to welcome Avon to the Liverpool Ladies FC family as their first principal partner.

"Avon is an iconic women's brand with a rich history and shares the same core values as Liverpool Ladies Football Club. We are looking forward to a fruitful partnership that will help bring women's football to the top of the agenda."

Andrea Slater, general manager of Avon UK, said: "Avon's purpose is to inspire and create a world with more empowered women. This sponsorship aims to inspire women all over the world to drive real change in women's football – breaking down social barriers, challenging stereotypes, and empowering young girls and women to play the sport that they love.

"This sponsorship is another stride forward in our support for women and one that we're approaching with whole hearted commitment as we embark on this new and exciting venture together. The teams and professionals we have spoken to on this journey are truly inspirational women, working together to achieve their goals, and we are very excited to be sponsoring Liverpool Ladies Football Club and supporting the women through all of their future successes."

AVON
the company for women

being followed by an 4-2 victory over Reading FC Women, with Laura among the scorers against the Royals.

"The Spring Series is going to be a huge test for every team because of the large number of games in a short period of time. Personally, I'm very excited because I've never had anything like that before, so it's going to really test me and I think it will be a good period for the squad too.

"Everyone will get a good amount of game-time and we can really work on things. Then, come the main season, we'll be well-drilled and ready to go. But we're not just here to use the Spring Series as training games, we are hoping to get as many positive results as we can and we are really looking forward to it."

Laura has been capped once by England, coming on as a substitute against China in 2015. She hopes the move to Liverpool and the opportunity to play regular football will boost her chances of a return to the Lionesses squad in the long-term.

"We have a good number of English girls in our squad and I think that always helps. Scott wants to progress with a core of English players and encourage us to push towards getting into the England set-up. If I got the chance again, I'd grab it with both hands.

"But at the minute, I'm not really focusing on that – I'm just concentrating on my performances here at Liverpool and then if that comes, then it comes."

Laura, who scored twice in 15 appearances during her loan stint in 2016, believes the Reds can be competitive at the top end of the table when the revamped FA WSL 1 campaign begins in September.

"With the squad that we have, I think realistically we should be targeting a Champions League spot. Last year we were heading towards that. It was possible but we fell away a little bit at the end.

"I think that had we been together longer and the season was a longer one, then we might have been able to achieve that. But it is certainly a target for us in the future."


In FA WSL action at Reading last season

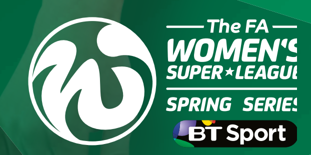
SPRING SERIES RESULTS & FIXTURES

March
19 Everton (FAC 5, H) 2-1*
26 Notts C (FAC 6, H) 2-0
April
17 Man City (FAC S-F, A) 0-1
23 Yeovil Town (A) 4-1
28 Reading (H) 4-2
May
04 Arsenal (A)
07 Birmingham City (A)
17 Sunderland (H)
20 Bristol City (A)
28 Chelsea (A)
June
3 Man City (H)



Ladies





SPRING SERIES FIXTURES 2017

v Sunderland AFC Ladies
Wednesday 17th May, KO 7pm

v Manchester City Women
Saturday 3rd June, KO 2pm

Online Prices

Adults
£5

Child & Concessions
£2.50

Family (2+2)
£12

Tickets can be purchased online from liverpoolfc.com/ladiestickets. Tickets purchased at the turnstiles on a matchday are priced at £6 adults; £3 children/concessions; £15 family. Please note the stadium can only take cash payments on matchdays. Children under 16 years. Concessions are students, seniors 65+ years and disabled supporters.
Please note: you will be asked to show ID/proof of eligibility at the turnstiles on matchdays. Family tickets are for 2 adults and 2 children under 16 years. Please note kick-off times are subject to change, for the latest fixture details visit

ladies.liverpoolfc.com

HARRY'S GAME

LIverpool FC's Under-23s captain Harry Wilson talks about his progress with club and country



"WHEN YOU'VE GOT A MANAGER WILLING TO GIVE YOUNGSTERS A CHANCE IT FILLS US WITH HOPE"

The naming of the Wales squad for the 2018 World Cup qualifier with the Republic of Ireland in March had one eye on the future.

And that future could have a strong Liverpool FC link after Chris Coleman selected the Reds' Under-23s captain Harry Wilson, fellow forward Ben Woodburn and goalkeeper Danny Ward among his 23-man party.

The trio all watched from the bench as the game in Dublin ended in a goalless draw but Wilson, Wales' youngest-ever player, was happy to be part of the set-up in a season that has seen him make his first-team bow for Jürgen Klopp's senior side.

"Wales is very important to me and the same is true for Ben as well. He's been there through the age-group teams like myself. So hopefully we can team up with Wales regularly as well and help them do well. We have Danny Ward, who is on loan at Huddersfield, too. I have been



Up against the side that might've signed him




Leading the U23s out at Anfield

keeping an eye on Huddersfield Town's results while he has been there and I think he's doing well. I watched him play for Wales in the Euros last summer and I thought he did really well. He's got a great future ahead of him."

Coach Coleman had handed Wilson his senior international debut as a substitute against Belgium in October 2013, while aged just 16 years and 208 days. It was an appearance that reportedly earned his grandfather a substantial sum of money after he'd placed a bet that an 18-month-old Harry would one day play for his country at senior level.

"I'd been told [about it]. But I thought I had to start the game for him to win the bet. It was only afterwards when my mum said: 'Grandad will be happy' that I found out he'd actually won.

"Being just 16 and my grandad's bet probably brought me a little bit more attention. But now I'm just concentrating on training and playing and hopefully I will get to represent my country again in the near future."

Harry, who turned 20 in March, has been with the Reds since he joined the club's Under-9s team. He had also been coveted by Manchester United.

As a young boy training with Wrexham, his hometown club, his natural ability stood out to such an extent that when the Welsh club

"MY FAMILY ARE ALL LIVERPOOL SUPPORTERS SO FOR ME TO BE HERE MEANS SO MUCH"

formed a link-up with United, the Old Trafford outfit wanted to sign him.

"Their training sessions took place in Chester," he recalls. "United said they wanted me and that I'd get a phone-call in a few weeks. United's loss was Liverpool's gain as the Reds moved swiftly to acquire his services.

"At first coming to the Academy was daunting because you are so aware that this is one of the biggest clubs in the world," he says. "I was nervous. But when you are young, you quickly make friends. Eighteen of us originally signed at the same time. Of that group only one other, Ryan Kent, is still at the club."

Back in January Harry took another step forward in his development when he made his first-team debut as a second-half substitute in the FA Cup third-round replay win at Plymouth Argyle.

"I was training at the Academy on the Saturday morning and we were getting ready for the Under-23s league game against Manchester United on the Monday," he explains. "The manager Mick Garrity came up to me and said: 'You're not going to be involved on Monday as they want you at Melwood to prepare for the Plymouth game'.

"Obviously I was excited. On the Sunday morning I went to Melwood and leading up to the game I felt I'd done quite well in training. Then I saw the press conference the manager gave beforehand when he said I would be the next young player involved, so that gave me a bit of excitement as well.

"We travelled down to Plymouth, I was named on the bench, then thankfully my moment came.

"In the first instance, we knew it was going to be a tough game. Plymouth played well and defended



resolutely and, at their stadium, their fans gave them an extra push. I think the manager showed great faith in our young players for that game. When he told me I was going on it was a mixture of nerves and excitement. But once I was out on the field I just tried playing my normal game."

Earlier in pre-season, the Reds' Academy staff had shown their faith in Harry when they named him captain of the Under-23s. He says it was an honour he wasn't expecting but one which made him incredibly proud.

"The manager at the time, Mick Beale, said: 'You're going to be my captain, I want you to show leadership'. I'd like to think I have.

"I've enjoyed the role and I think it's helped me grow as a person and as a player. You still have to try and play your own game but you also have a responsibility to help the team a bit more as well.

"I wouldn't say I'm particularly vocal on the pitch but I think I can lead in different ways; whether that's to get the team going if we need a goal or maybe do something to gee us up. I'm that type of leader and I always try to lead by example. I also try to have a quiet word of encouragement to the other lads, especially the younger ones.

"This year we've had a fairly young team in the Under-23s with a lot of players making the step up from Under-18s football to the 23s. I made that step a couple of years ago and I know it's a big one so I've tried my best to help encourage them and let them fit in as well as they can."

Harry believes the staff at the Academy deserve great credit for the

"I'M HAPPY WITH THE GOALS AND ASSISTS BUT AS LONG AS WE'RE WINNING THAT'S WHAT MATTERS"

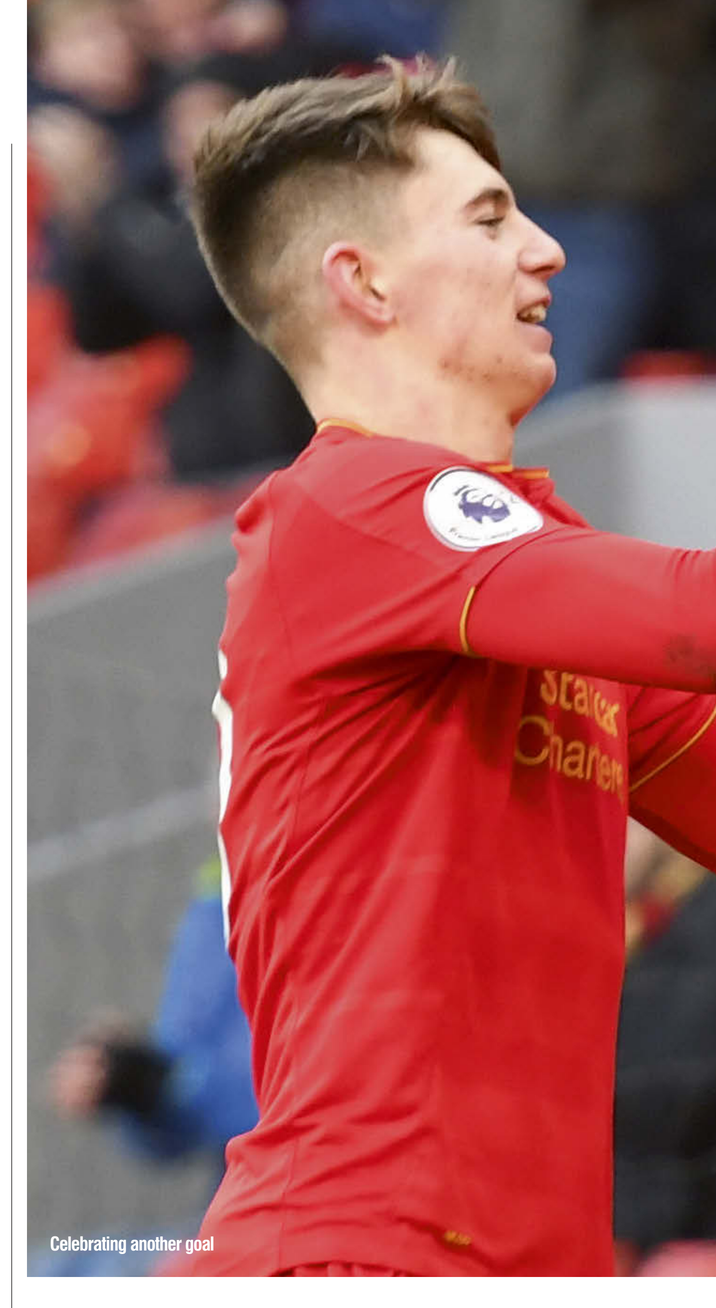
way he has progressed and believes the next generation of players will benefit under their guidance too, especially with Steven Gerrard now amongst their number.

"The coaching staff at the Academy are fantastic and I think Stevie coming in is a massive boost for everyone there, especially the younger age group players.

"Mick Beale [who left in December to join Brazilian side Sao Paulo as assistant-manager] was a massive influence on me.

"When he first came in, I was 16. I was in his first team and then he went on to become the U21s manager so he's been the one coach who has understood me better than most. He knew my strengths and my weaknesses and he helped me a lot. As I say, he was also the one who gave me the captaincy this season and that probably helped me to where I am now, training regularly at Melwood.

"The first-team training is similar to the way it is at the Academy, albeit at a much higher pace. Training with the first-team squad day in, day out for the past few months has been fantastic for me. Jürgen Klopp is a great coach and he's very good with the players. When


Celebrating another goal


Training at Melwood with the first-team squad

you have done something well, he takes time to praise you. Then if there's things you need to change, he'll come and have a quiet word with you and say: 'You need to do this, you need to do that'. I find that very helpful.

"Of course, when you've got a manager who is willing to give the young lads a go, it fills everyone with hope. I think everyone at the Academy understands that if you perform consistently well then you will get a chance and that's really encouraging for all the young players."

The Welsh youngster had scored 18 goals in 19 competitive games for the U23s by the start of May as well as providing seven assists – returns he declares himself pleased with.

"I'm really happy with the goals and assists but I think the team performances and results we've got this season have been good as well," he says. "As long as we're winning and playing well, that's all that matters.

"I believe my all-round game has improved over the past couple of years and I've been working on things that weren't as strong. Finishing on my

right-foot is one example and I've done a lot of work with [Academy director] Alex Inglethorpe on that, having 10 or 15 minutes after the regular sessions, just finishing with the right-foot.

"I also feel that my defensive work has got a lot better, as well as the positions I get myself in so that I am able to press forwards or press backwards, whatever it may be.

"I'd describe myself as an 'attacker' because I feel that I can play anywhere at the higher end of the pitch. I like to affect games and to drift infield if I'm on the wing but I've got no problem with staying wide either. I think it all depends on how a particular game is going."

And having now had that taste of senior action, the no59 is keen for more. "I've been here a long time now and so from a young age I've been taught what Liverpool Football Club means.

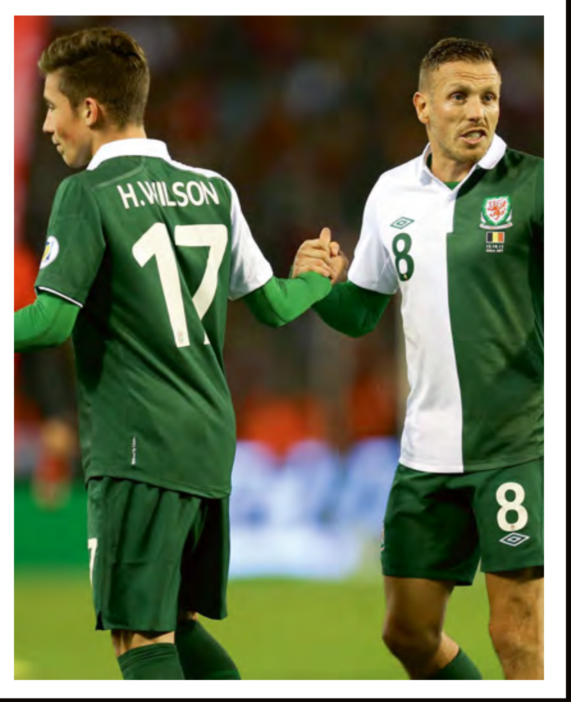
"My family are all Liverpool supporters and always have been, so for me to play for this club for so long means a lot. I'm hoping to be here for a long time to come yet".

Will the passenger now boarding...

It's three-and-a-half years since Harry Wilson became Wales' youngest player, as a late sub in a 1-1 draw with Belgium in Brussels.

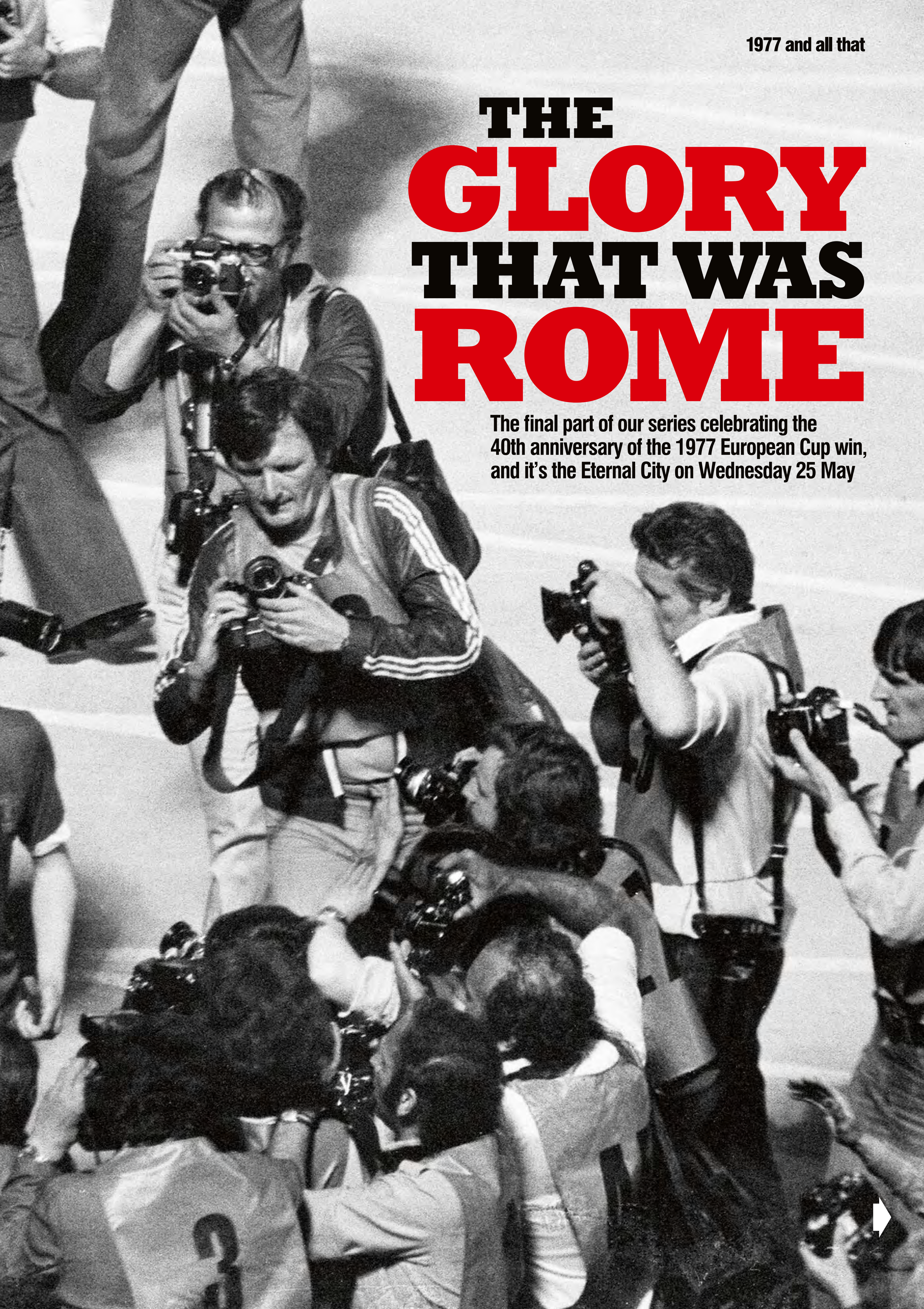
On the night Harry replaced former Reds striker Craig Bellamy, 18 years his senior and signing off from international duty after 78 caps. Wilson, at 16 years and 207 days, beat the previous record set by Gareth Bale by 108 days.

More recently Jürgen Klopp revealed how Harry's call-up for the World Cup qualifier against the Republic of Ireland in Dublin came as the player was boarding the LFC flight to warm-weather training in Tenerife. "He came onto the plane and said, 'I've got a message – I'm called up'. I told him to call the number and asked if it was serious. He said yes. 'Okay, then [Wales will] have to buy him a washbag because we cannot get his suitcase out of the plane!'"



Interview: William Hughes





THE GLORY THAT WAS ROME

The final part of our series celebrating the 40th anniversary of the 1977 European Cup win, and it's the Eternal City on Wednesday 25 May

Rome. The Eternal City. Capital of the Roman Empire. Birthplace of Western civilisation. Home of the Pope. Famous for its Coliseum. And the scene of Liverpool Football Club's historic first European Cup win, 40 years ago, in May 1977.

A generation of Reds still regard that night as Liverpool's greatest, Istanbul 2005 being the other contender, although getting to the Stadio Olimpico so see Bob Paisley's men become champions of Europe had a few challenges along the way.

Opened in 1953, the shared home of AS Roma and SS Lazio had a capacity of 85,000. But in the weeks before the final UEFA announced that the attendance would be capped at 65,000 so that giant advertising hoardings could be placed around the pitch with both Liverpool and opponents Borussia Moenchengladbach receiving 17,000 tickets each.

Modern football, eh?

Incredibly, it was the club's responsibility to collect the tickets from Italy so Paisley and trusted Boot Room

Reds face supreme test in stifling Rome

INTO THE CAULDRON

ROMAN HAT-TRICK: Reds fan Neville Holmes from Runcorn knew the journey to Rome would be tiring ... so he built himself a special re-inforced hat that doubles as a stool.

Paisley leaves out Toshack

LIVERPOOL'S players have stepped into a Mediterranean oven to add to their giant task in to-night's European Cup final here in sun-baked Rome.

MICHAEL CHARTERS REPORTS FROM ROME



Words: Chris McLoughlin

member Tom Saunders travelled to Rome in advance to pick them up. How did they bring them back? In a suitcase. As you do with 17,000 tickets for the European Cup final!

Tickets were priced between £3 and £9, but with travel companies hiking round-trip flight and hotel deals by 40 per cent, many Kopites travelled to the Italian capital via train, boat and car rather than fly. It took around 36 hours to get there, but with Gladbach not taking up their full allocation it turned out that getting a prized pass into the stadium wasn't as difficult to obtain as anticipated, which was good news for the 26,000 Reds who spent an estimated £1 million to make the pilgrimage to Rome.


We print (almost) everything except money... Try us !!!

Liverpool Echo

THE RED GLADIATORS RETURN ...
Special route map for Thursday's homecoming — Page 8

ROME—HERE WE COME!

The raucous Reds go marching in

FROM STEPHEN OLDFIELD IN ROME

Off—with hope in their hearts

Reds in Rome: how it looked that night

The travelling Kop took over the city, becoming a bigger tourist attraction than the Trevi Fountain and Vatican City as the scorching sunshine blazed high above. Rome was Red for the day and as dusk fell, the Stadio Olimpico came alive with scores of chequered red-and-white flags – on sale outside – turning the Curva Nord into a swaying sea of colour.

"If there's one sight I want to see on my deathbed it's the scene that greeted me when I walked onto the Curva Nord terrace," wrote Dave Kirby in *Here We Go Gathering Cups in May* – a book named after a Liverpool banner on display that night.

"WE WERE JUST STAGGERED BY THE ATMOSPHERE THAT GREETED US; WE FELT FOUR FEET TALLER"

"A red-and-white panoramic rush of waving chequered flags, home-made banners, epaulettes, scarves, hats and streamers stretching three quarters of the way around the ground – as far as breathtaking colour and beauty goes, it was right up there with the Swiss Alps. A vision that'll never fade."

The most famous banner of all was produced in tribute to the Reds' Welsh left-back Joey Jones: 'JOEY ATE THE FROGS LEGS, MADE THE SWISS ROLL, NOW HE'S MUNCHING GLADBACH'.

It was an incredible sight, the largest travelling contingent of Liverpool supporters to ever travel across the Continent, and striker David Johnson, a substitute that night, believes it inspired the team to victory.

"We were absolutely staggered by the atmosphere that greeted us. The place had been taken over by Liverpool fans. All we could take in was



this heaving mass of red and white. We looked at each other and grew about four feet taller. With such support there was absolutely no way we could possibly lose."

Beaten by Manchester United in the FA Cup four days earlier, Paisley's players had got that treble-ending defeat out of their system by having a fair few drinks on the train back from London that'd become stranded for two hours due to a broken-down locomotive further up the line.

On the flight over to Rome the squad were joined by Bill Shankly who spent the journey exchanging banter with Denis Law, who'd played under Shanks at Huddersfield Town and was covering the game as a BBC pundit. Liverpool opted to stay in a central hotel that was full of fans, rather than hidden out of sight in the countryside, so the players could enjoy the occasion.

"If any of you want to go for a walk, well, there's nothing to see because I've bloody well bombed it all!" they were told by a joking Paisley, who served with Montgomery's Eighth Army as an anti-tank gunner during World War II and was in Rome in 1944 when the Allies liberated it.

There was a clear sense of irony to Bob that Liverpool's opponents were German and Gladbach, coached by Udo Latek and skippered by Berti Vogts, were expecting a tough encounter. "Liverpool are a fine side," said Latek, "but we are a very good team as well." Vogts was concerned about the man he had to mark: "Kevin Keegan is the player who will worry us more than anyone, it will not be easy to keep him quiet." He was right.

Keegan was playing in his last game for Liverpool, having already agreed to join SV Hamburg the following season, and he terrorised Gladbach with his running and movement. Ian Callaghan, at the age of 34, was brought into the side after John Toshack failed a fitness test on the morning of the game and it was another Scouser, Terry McDermott, who opened the scoring in the 27th minute after Keegan dragged Vogts out of position to open up space for the midfielder to run into.

"When Steve Heighway released the ball, I was in," he recalls in his

"I SAW THEIR HUGE KEEPER COMING OUT AND THOUGHT I BETTER GET RID OF THIS QUICK!"


CHAMPIONS OF EUROPE

JUMPING JOEY SAYS IT ALL...

...AND THE BANNER KEEPS A TALLY OF HIS 'VICTIMS'

Smiles, smiles, all the way as Reds take Europe by storm

'Liverpool are magic'—the song Rome

autobiography *Terry Mac: Living For the Moment*. "I saw their keeper Wolfgang Knieb coming out. He must have been about 6ft 8in, a real giant. I just sensed this huge shadow zooming in on me and I thought: I'd better get rid of this before he gets any nearer. So I just hit it and it flew into the corner of the net."

Rainer Bonhof had hit the post six minutes before that goal with a bobbling low shot, a reminder of how dangerous the German champions could be, and they were level six minutes after the break when Allan Simonsen seized onto a loose pass by Jimmy Case and rifled past Ray Clemence.



Keegan v Vogts: iconic

Jimmy Case, Ray Kennedy, Ol Big Ears, Terry McDermott and Phil Neal



Boss Bob Paisley and veteran Ian Callaghan

"I WALKED UP THE STEPS AND THOUGHT OF ALL THOSE WHO'D HELPED PUT US IN THIS POSITION"

Suddenly Gladbach were on top and, but for saves by Clemence from Jupp Heynckes, Simonsen and Uli Stielike, when one-on-one, they'd have been ahead and possibly out of sight. Instead the scores remained level and Liverpool hit Borussia with a sucker-punch.

Tommy Smith, at the age of 32, was playing in place of the injured Phil Thompson in what was expected to be his final appearance in a red shirt, two days before his Anfield testimonial. With 64 minutes on the clock he went up for a corner. Team-mate Heighway could only take it by beginning his run-up on the Olympic running-track, due to the tiny amount of grass behind the corner flag. When it came over, Smith rose above two German defenders to power a header into the back of the net for his first goal since 1974!

Not bad for a lad playing his 604th game and whose two front false teeth were in Ronnie Moran's pocket for safe keeping. "I've changed my name to Roy of the Rovers," said the Anfield Iron afterwards, adding: "I thought of having a brass plate put in my nut to mark the spot!"

The goal knocked the stuffing out of Gladbach and when Keegan ran at a tired Vogts ten minutes from time he was upended in the box. Penalty. Up stepped Phil Neal and with such simplicity the European Cup was won.

Liverpool were champions of Europe and the smile that lit up captain Emlyn Hughes' face as he hoisted the famous trophy aloft could be seen from the moon. "I remember walking up those steps to lift the cup and I felt privileged to do so," said Emlyn, who passed away in 2004.

"The names that were flashing through my mind were the likes of Roger Hunt, Ian St John, Ron Yeats, Shanks and Reuben Bennett. They were the men who had given us the



EUROPEAN CUP FINAL

HEADING FOR HISTORY

Tommy Smith's final game and a goal that makes Liverpool immortal

CHAMPIONS OF EUROPE 2

COMING UP .... The three goals that restored England's pride

THE NIGHT LIVERPOOL DID US PROUD

MICHAEL CHARTERS BIG MATCH REPORT

'Now I think I become a Kopite'

chance to win the European Cup and who had put us in the position we were in. As I reached out to collect the cup I knew that it was as much for them as for us."

The post-match celebrations were held in a private room at the team hotel. With hundreds of Reds milling around outside, manager Paisley, who "drunk in the success" rather than alcohol that night, decided to let them all in. Within moments the buffet had gone, while the European Cup was soon being paraded outside the hotel! That Liverpool supporters were trusted to safely return it, which they did half-an-hour later, was testament to the bond and trust between themselves and the club.

The following evening 'Ol Big Ears was paraded around Liverpool on an open-top bus alongside the League championship trophy with over half-a-million people taking to the streets to welcome the champions of Europe home.

From Speke Airport to St George's Hall, every vantage point had Kopites upon it bedecked in red and white, all desperate to get a glimpse of the cup and the legends who had won it. The city of Liverpool has seen some homecomings, but this was on a different level. You could feel the sense of pride on every corner and when Paisley said, "We've done the country proud," he wasn't far wrong.

A week later, on 7 June, people took to the streets again to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee, but in Liverpool 1977 will always be remembered as the year that the Reds won that first silver European Cup.

Four more have since followed, but Rome 77 will always be special for those who lived it.

EUROPEAN CUP FINAL 25 MAY 1977
LIVERPOOL 3 BORUSSIA MOENCHENGLADBACH 1
Liverpool: Clemence, Neal, Jones, Smith, Kennedy, Hughes, Keegan, Case, Heighway, Callaghan, McDermott.
Subs not used: McDonnell, Lindsay, Fairclough, Johnson, Waddle.
Goals: McDermott (27), Smith (64), Neal (82pen).
Moenchengladbach: Kneib, Vogts, Klinkhammer, Wittkamp, Bonhof, Wohlers (Hannes 79), Simonsen, Wimmer (Kulic 24), Stielike, Schaffer, Heynckes.
Subs not used: Kleff, Del'Haye, Heidenreich.
Goal: Simonsen (52).



Fans at Liverpool Airport welcoming the triumphant team home

Neil Mellor

Regular partnerships are key to Liverpool FC conceding less goals

During the six seasons that Rafa Benitez managed Liverpool, the Reds conceded 41, 25, 27, 28, 27 and 35 Premier League goals respectively. In the six seasons that followed Liverpool conceded 44, 40, 43, 50, 48 and 50 league goals. At the time of writing, ahead of the Southampton match at Anfield, the Reds have let in 42 goals.

A huge reason for that difference is our centre-half partnerships. Jamie Carragher and Sami Hyypia were a strong central defensive pairing for much of the Benitez era. They worked very well together, but were also both consistently fit and available, able to work on their partnership on a daily basis at Melwood. That benefitted the whole team.

Compare it to this season. Joel Matip and Dejan Lovren are Liverpool's recognised first-choice centre-backs, yet for various reasons they've only started 15 Premier League games alongside one another. It is no coincidence that Liverpool have only lost once when they have.

When I was playing up front against an established partnership I knew it would be tough. When defenders know how to play off each other it is harder for a centre-forward to play against whereas I always saw central defenders who weren't used to playing together as a weakness that could be exploited. Liverpool have lacked that continuity over a number of seasons.

The goalkeeping situation is also an issue. Pepe Reina was Liverpool's recognised number one from 2005 onwards whereas this season Simon Mignolet started the campaign, Loris Karius came in and then Mignolet won his place back. Combine all that chopping and changing and it inevitably has a negative impact, playing a big part in the reality that Liverpool have again conceded too many goals this season.

Lovren recently signed a new contract and that suggests that Jürgen Klopp sees his partnership with Matip as having a long-term future, despite speculation linking players such as Southampton's Virgil van Dijk with a move to Anfield. If van Dijk is available I'd like to see him in a red shirt, but at this stage of the season – with important games to play – the last thing players need to see or hear is speculation suggesting they could be replaced.

Modern day full-backs are encouraged to get forward more, but the negative aspect of that is they are then less likely to be in position to stop crosses from coming in or to defend the far post properly. Perhaps that's an area Klopp will also look at.

Operating with a back three allows full-backs to go forward more with less defensive responsibility and if such a system was operated at Liverpool it could provide an opportunity for Joe Gomez, a young player who I believe would suit playing on the right-hand side of a back three.

Gomez is comfortable in both central and wide areas, is good on the ball and also has pace. I certainly see him being in and around the squad much more next season and I also firmly believe that Liverpool do not need to sign a new first-choice left-back during the summer.

James Milner has had an absolutely superb season. I've got the utmost confidence in him at left-back, I don't worry about him playing there at all whereas previously it has been a problem position. Milner is defensively disciplined, tackles well, understands how to cover and has the ability to defend the far post so I think the constant 'we need a new left-back' talk amongst Liverpool fans is unfair.

There are very few incidents you can pinpoint where he has lost his discipline defensively. How many goals can you think of that have been conceded as a result of a mistake by Milner? Any? People say he isn't a left-back, but he has proved he can play there. He's a top pro whose attitude and commitment to Liverpool is spot on and one performance in particular stands out – Man City away.

City cross the ball hard and low across the penalty area. During that game we needed a left-back who could defend the far post when those crosses came in and Milner stopped two or three certain goals by being in the right position at the right time, throwing himself into challenges when he had to. That's why Liverpool do not need to buy a recognised left-back.

We've got James Milner and I'd happily see him start next season playing in that position again.

Follow Neil on Twitter
@NeilMellor33



Dejan Lovren signed a new long-term contract with LFC last month


CLUB
Community champions, the Reds' new CEO plus the latest LFC official gear
Anfield in the sunshine in 2017. Can you name the Reds' opponents when they first staged a home match at the ground back on 1 September 1892?
Answer on page 98



They were one of the last areas of the expanded Main Stand to be fully completed – but it's clearly been worth the wait. These shots show the new home dressing-room at Anfield in all its ultra-spacious glory. Complete with name-plates for each first-team player, the new space is designed to mirror LFC's Melwood training-ground facility, and there is also a fully-equipped warm-up and treatment-room with the latest 4G artificial turf.

DRESS TO



IMPRESS

Welcome inside the home team's dressing-room at Anfield – all-new and rather awesome



For decades the home dressing-room at Anfield was homely but basic; altogether a bit cramped, with makeshift treatment-tables, football boots piled on the floor, and the players' kit laid out on simple wooden benches and hung from metal pegs. The away-team dressing-room was even less glamorous! Today they're more worthy of the world-class players who prepare for action on matchday at Anfield, with some of the best facilities in modern football.


Gomez
14
10
12

REDS PAIR NAMED AS PFA COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Milner and Harris recognised for their work with club's official charity

Vice-captain James Milner and Liverpool Ladies defender Martha Harris have been awarded PFA Community Champion Trophies in recognition of their support of the LFC Foundation.

The awards, received for the players' respective work in the local community, were presented by the LFC Foundation during a special handover at Melwood.

The Community Champion Trophy was introduced by the Professional Footballers' Association last season for clubs in the English Football League, but following its success, the award has now been extended to include Premier League clubs.

Milner was nominated by the LFC Foundation following his generous donation to fund a series of half-term multi-sports camps in Anfield, which will benefit almost 500 local children.

James' own charity, the James Milner Foundation, donated £16,000 to the LFC Foundation last year and he has since visited the sessions, getting involved in the activities and meeting the participants.

Ladies' star Harris was nominated by the LFC Foundation for her commitment to local grassroots clubs and community sessions, which she has attended regularly as part of her university degree.

Martha's presence at the sessions has inspired many female football participants, in particular the attendees of the LFC Foundation Women and Girls project.

Andrea Cooper, head of the LFC Foundation, said: "James and Martha have both made outstanding contributions to the work we do at the LFC Foundation.

"Their commitment and dedication to the projects they have supported has made such a difference, and their presence at sessions has been invaluable to the participants.

"We're delighted to hand over these awards in recognition of their wonderful efforts."



James and Martha with their awards

LFC is 125 on 3 June!

Saturday 3 June will mark 125 years since Liverpool Football Club was registered with the Board of Trade. The Club will mark the occasion with a year-long programme of celebrations, which will include activity on Liverpool Ladies' final Spring Series game against Manchester City Women on that day.

Keep your eyes peeled on liverpoolfc.com and LFC TV for further details.



Certificate of Change of Name

Everton Football Club and Athletic Grounds Company Limited

I hereby Certify, That the

Everton Football Club and Athletic Grounds Company Limited

having, with the sanction of a Special Resolution of the said Company, and with the approval of the BOARD OF TRADE, changed its name, is now called the

Liverpool Football Club and Athletic Grounds Company Limited

and I have entered such new name on the Register accordingly.

Given under my hand at London this Third day of June One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety Two.

Registrar of Joint Stock Companies

WELCOME PETER MOORE

New CEO bids farewell to former role with EA Sports as he arrives at LFC this summer



LFC's new CEO Peter Moore

New Liverpool Football Club chief executive officer Peter Moore has described his forthcoming move to Anfield as "a calling."

The 62-year-old, who was born in Liverpool, begins his new role in June and recently tweeted about leaving his previous position of chief competition officer at EA Sports for a new career at LFC.

"These are the words I have dreaded writing for weeks now, following the announcement of my appointment as CEO of Liverpool FC," he wrote. "I am leaving behind thousands of great memories that comprise the career journey of a lifetime. I shall miss everything about this industry each day henceforth.

"I move on now, not to a job, but more of a calling. With one more crank of the self-invention wheel, I am taking on a new and unique challenge, one that's roots are embedded in my heart.

"To everyone that I have had the privilege of working for, with, or at times, against, I love and cherish our time together."

Moore, who will report directly to Fenway Sports Group, has spent almost a decade at EA Sports in various leadership positions, including chief operating officer and president, having previously held senior roles with Microsoft, SEGA and Reebok.

He holds a bachelor's degree from Keele University, a master's degree from California State University and is a lifelong Liverpool supporter.

His appointment completes a 10-month transition plan by FSG and finalises the senior management structure at the club.

ADD A PIECE OF LIVERPOOL FC HISTORY TO YOUR HOME



Choose your favourite moments from thousands of official LFC images both past and present and transform them into amazing gifts and homeware!

PRODUCTS

Photographic & Fine Art Prints
Boxed Canvas Prints
Jigsaws • Mugs • Mousemats
Fridge Magnets • Keyrings
Cushions • Acrylic Blocks
Postcards and Greetings Cards
Glass Coasters
Glass Mounts & Tablemats

picturestore.liverpoolfc.com

Picturestore.liverpoolfc.com features thousands of images from Liverpool Football Club including historic and present games, players and trophies. The site is a comprehensive online outlet for photographic prints, framed prints, canvasses, creative gifts and much more. With worldwide shipping and multi currency, we have created a picture store for all fans of Liverpool Football Club, no matter where in the world you are.





When the LFC Family comes together, we can do great things...

THANK YOU!

FOR RAISING OVER £1 MILLION AT THE LFC FOUNDATION LEGENDS CHARITY MATCH 2017

Find out how these vital funds create life changing opportunities for children and young people by visiting

www.liverpoolfc.com/foundation

A WINNING RUN

LFC ambassadors Rushie and Gary Mac on hand to start city sporting spectacular

The LFC Foundation was admirably represented at the annual Vitality Liverpool Half-Marathon in April, with 5,000 runners taking part in the 13.1-mile event plus the BTR 10-mile Road Race which ran alongside the main event.

Liverpool FC legends Ian Rush and Gary McAllister officially started the race, along with club mascot Mighty Red, and also cheered on runners who were fundraising for the LFC Foundation. Both races started and finished at the city's Pier Head, taking in Liverpool's cathedrals, parks and waterfront along the way.

In sunny conditions last year's top-placed male and female runners in the half-marathon again took first place: Dejene Gezimu from Liverpool Harriers and Michelle Nolan from Gateshead Harriers AC. Both also set new course-records.

Elsewhere Alistair Rutherford from Allerton became the world's fastest half-marathon runner dressed as a musical instrument, and David Miles from Parbold the world's fastest half-marathon runner dressed as a chef!

It was the 24th staging of the event, with participants from as far afield as France, Norway, Italy, Germany, Brazil, Hong Kong, Malta, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa and the USA.

Liverpool FC ambassador Ian Rush said: "It was a great honour to start the Vitality Liverpool Half-Marathon. Seeing thousands of runners raising money for so many great causes, including the LFC Foundation – it was really inspiring. Many congratulations to Dejene Gezimu and Michelle Nolan, those were two incredible finishes."

Fellow LFC ambassador Gary McAllister added: "It was fantastic to be on the start line cheering the runners on. The atmosphere was electric and it was great to see so many Liverpool FC fans turn out to run."

Rushie and Gary Mac join Mighty Red at the finish line



THE LFC FOUNDATION IS THE OFFICIAL CHARITY OF LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB. WE CREATE LIFE CHANGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN MERSEYSIDE AND BEYOND. FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @LFCFOUNDATION





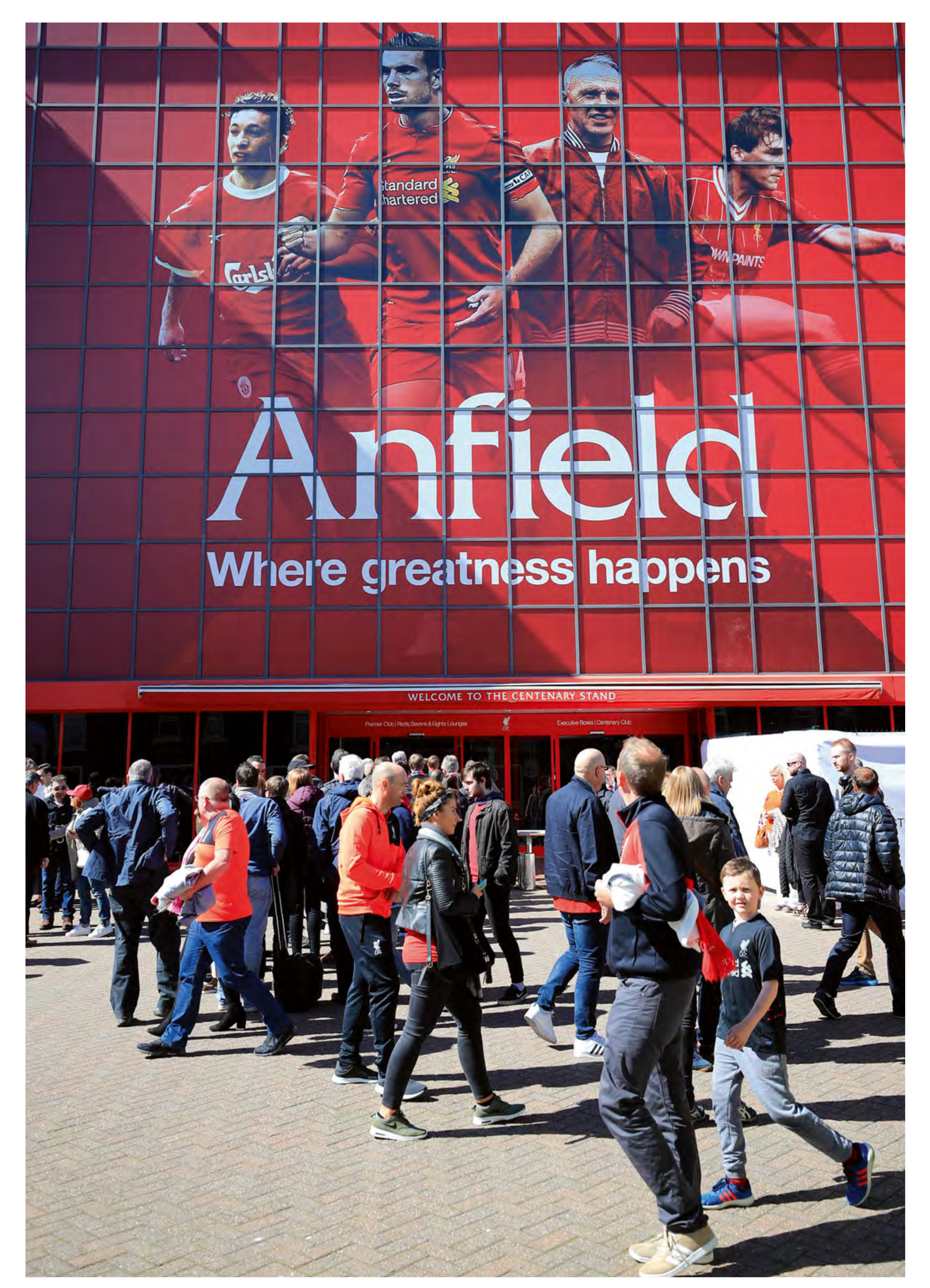
THE NEW HOME KIT 17/18

Get ready for this summer and next season with the all-new home kit and training range

AND THE NEW TRAINING RANGE



Shop for all your Liverpool FC essentials in all Official Club Stores and the Official Online Store at store.liverpoolfc.com. For more details follow @LFCRetail on Twitter and Instagram.



QUIZ ANSWERS: LIVERPOOL p7: Bill Shankly's statue at Anfield is seven feet tall; **FOOTBALL p23:** After the Middlesbrough game on 21 May, Jürgen Klopp will have taken charge of 99 competitive fixtures as Liverpool FC manager; **CLUB p85:** LFC's first home game at Anfield on 1 September 1892 was against Rotherham Town and ended in a 7-1 home win.



















































We are pleased to recognise the Official Partners of Liverpool FC